

THE
Manchester Quarterly:

A JOURNAL OF
LITERATURE AND ART.

VOL. XXII. 1903.

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PUBLISHED FOR
THE MANCHESTER LITERARY CLUB,
BY
SHERRATT & HUGHES,
27, ST. ANN STREET, MANCHESTER.

Manchester Quarterly

Vol. 1

1881-1882

1881

Published by the Manchester Literary Club

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LXXXV.—January, 1903.

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Manchester Quarterly Advertiser.

JANUARY, 1903.

NOTICE.— Communications intended for the Editor may be addressed to Mr. CREDLAND, 185, Great Cheetham Street, Higher Broughton.

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Manchester Literary Club.

FOUNDED 1862.

The objects of the MANCHESTER LITERARY CLUB are:—

1. To encourage the pursuit of Literature and Art; to promote research in the several departments of intellectual work; and to further the interests of Authors and Artists in Lancashire.
2. To publish from time to time works illustrating or elucidating the literature, art, and history of the county.
3. To provide a place of meeting where persons interested in the furtherance of these objects can associate together.

The methods by which these objects are sought to be obtained are:—

1. The holding of weekly meetings, from October to April, for social intercourse, and for the hearing and discussion of papers.
2. The publication of such papers, at length or abridged, in a Magazine, entitled the *Manchester Quarterly*, as well as in an annual volume of Transactions; and of other work undertaken at the instance of the Club, including a projected series of volumes dealing with local literature.
3. The formation of a library consisting of (a) works by members, (b) books by local writers or relating to the locality, and (c) general works of reference.
4. The exhibition, as occasion offers, of pictures by artist members of the Club.

Membership of the Club is limited to authors, journalists, men of letters, painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, musical composers, members of the learned professions, and of English and foreign universities, librarians, and generally persons engaged or specially interested in literary or artistic pursuits.

The meetings are held at the Grand Hotel, Aytoun Street, every Monday evening during the Session. Each Session opens and closes with a *Conversazione*. There are also occasional Musical and Dramatic Evenings, and a Christmas Supper. During the vacation excursions are held, of which due notice is given.

W. R. CREDLAND, *Hon. Secretary*,

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PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

From a Photograph by W. Morrison, Nottingham.



PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

By GEORGE MILNER.

I.

THE exterior life of Philip James Bailey was as simple and comprehensible as his poem—the work of his interior life—was complex and difficult to estimate. He was born in Nottingham on the 29th of April, 1816. His father, Thomas Bailey, was the editor of a local journal, a writer of some repute in his native town, an antiquarian, and the author of a volume of poems. It is evident that he recognised the poetical bent of his son's genius, and with a paternal confidence not very common in such cases, aided its development by his sympathy and encouragement. The affection of the father was returned in full measure by the son. In the "Dedication" prefixed to "*Festus*" the poet writes:—

My father! unto thee to whom I owe
All that I am, all that I have and can;
Who madest me in thyself the sum of man
In all his generous aims and powers to know,¹

and adds that to earn his father's love is more to him than to have "strung his harp with golden strings." The early education of "*Festus* Bailey," as he was usually called in later years, was chiefly obtained in his native town and

1. All the quotations from "*Festus*" in this paper are made from the Third Edition, 1848.

under the direction of his father. At sixteen he entered the University of Glasgow. In 1833, having decided to adopt the legal profession, he was placed in the office of a London solicitor, and two years later became a member of Lincoln's Inn. He resided in London for some years, but does not appear to have seriously followed the business of the law. He had already accepted the vocation of the poet, and, like Milton and Wordsworth, was dedicated—consecrate and self-dedicated to his high calling.

During his residence in London his summer vacations were usually spent in his father's country house at Basford, a quaint and homely mansion, with a good library and pictures, and an old-fashioned garden. In his poem there are many indications of the influence which the rural scenery of this neighbourhood had upon his mind. It is said that the composition of "*Festus*" was begun in the retirement of Basford. Internal evidence fixes the period. It was before he had attained his twentieth year, and in less than three years the original draft, as we have it in the now rare first edition—a copy of which is before me—was completed. It was published in 1839 under circumstances which were peculiar. Although bearing the imprint "London: William Pickering," it was printed and practically issued by Wilmot Henry Jones, in Manchester. It is an octavo volume of 361 pages, and bears on its cover and bastard title-page the singular device—which was reproduced in some of the subsequent editions—of a coiling serpent beaten down by rays of light darting from a trilateral. The title is simply "*Festus, A Poem*," and does not bear the name of the author. Mr. Jones, the printer, was a relative of Mr. Bailey, who was at the time residing at the house of the former, presumably for the purpose of superintending the production of the poem. Circumstantial accounts of the publication exist. It is

said that the last half-sheet was put to press a little after five o'clock on April 27th, 1839, and a party of local literary men, together with the persons engaged in the mechanical execution of the work, was brought together on the same evening to celebrate the birth of the new poem. On the table before each guest there was laid a copy of the volume, in which he was requested to sign his name. The author signed last, but preserving his anonymity, as "*Festus*" only. The little story seems to throw a light, amusing in its seriousness, on the attitude of the young poet and his friends with regard to the publication.

Six years later (in 1845) Mr. Bailey issued a second edition, on the title-page of which the authorship is acknowledged. The Proem—an important addition—also makes its appearance here for the first time. This edition was printed in Pickering's best manner, and is, on the whole, both as to size and typography, the most pleasant to read. By 1877 the book had reached its tenth edition. In 1889 there followed what was called the "*Fiftieth Anniversary Edition*," and this was reprinted in 1893, being by that time enlarged, by continual additions, to about four times its original size. Although these English issues were numerous enough to prove that the Poem—especially when we consider its great length and its unusual character—had received an acceptance not often accorded to such works, its popularity in America was much greater, some thirty or forty editions having been published there.

Mr. Bailey is generally regarded—and justly so—as a poet of one book. He was, however, the author of many other works. After a silence of eleven years he published (in 1850) "*The Angel World, and other Poems*;" in 1855, "*The Mystic, and other Poems*;" in 1858, "*The Age: A*

Colloquial Satire;" in 1861, a prose essay on "The International Policy of the Great Powers;" and, finally, in 1867, "The Universal Hymn." It should be added that in later years large portions of all the poems mentioned above were gradually worked into various parts of "Festus." Of Bailey's life, apart from the publication of his books, little remains to be told. In 1856 his literary claims were recognised by the grant of a Civil List pension. From 1864 to 1875 he resided in Jersey, but made occasional excursions to Switzerland, France, and Italy. A serious failure in his health, the result of a sunstroke in Italy, brought him back in haste to England, and his physician ordered him to reside for a time at Whitby. Here he narrowly escaped death by drowning. Being a confident and experienced swimmer—there are passages in "Festus" which indicate this—he ventured too far, and was swept out by a strong tide. Assistance reached him only at the last moment. After residing for some time in North Devon, he returned to Nottingham, making his permanent home there at Trent Leigh (a house which he had bought), in The Ropewalk. Here he led a tranquil and secluded life. The world heard little of him, and many who had thought him long dead were startled when, in 1901, his old University of Glasgow conferred upon him the degree of LL.D., an honour which must have pleased the aged poet, but of which it may be truly said that "if it had been earlier it had been better."

II.

We may turn now to the consideration of "Festus." The poem is still one of the problems of literature. On its first appearance it was extravagantly praised, and the most outspoken appreciation was that which came from contemporary poets, who might be supposed to be both

competent and impartial judges. Tennyson said: "I can scarcely trust myself to say how much I admire it." Bulwer Lytton: "My admiration of it is deep and sincere." Browning's opinion was well known. He said that "he himself had written too much, but that Bailey had written too little." Individual estimates of the same kind were very numerous, and a chorus of praise came from the press, both in England and America; but the most influential reviews were either cautious, or silent, or unfavourable. And this represents the ambiguous position in which the poem remains to-day. Most living critics, we suspect, would approach the work with bated breath and an air of condescension, contenting themselves with a professional allusion to the "Spasmodic School," and to Bailey as its founder. To do this is to perpetuate a vulgar error. There was no "Spasmodic School," any more than there was a "Lake School" of poets. Alexander Smith and the other writers who, with more or less justice, were caricatured by Aytoun, had little in common with "Festus," except perhaps in the matter of peculiarly redundant imagery, and Bailey himself repudiated the imputed paternity. Readers, on the other hand, would appear to have been much more favourable than the critics. Very few poems of any kind have gone through so many editions, and Mr. Edmund Gosse—a very competent authority—in a recent article expresses the opinion that it "continues to have a wide circle of readers."

It is sometimes said that the time has not arrived for forming a just estimate. With this opinion we cannot agree. If it can be done at all, it can be done now. The material is all before us, and, as sixty-three years have elapsed since its first publication, there has been time enough to gain the right perspective. To begin with, it must be regarded—at least in its original form—as the

work of one who was little more than a boy, an inspired boy, if you will, like Chatterton or Keats. The boldness of its conception and the vastness of its plan were such that only the most mature intellect could have been expected to deal with them adequately. Bailey himself regarded it as only the first fruits of his muse, and as a "boyish feat." It was written, he says, when "life was at blood-heat," and when:—

He spake inspired;
Night and day thought came unheeded and undesired,
Like blood to his heart.

If Arnold's dictum be true that "poetry is at bottom a criticism of life," then "*Festus*" is poetry, for it deals with life in its broadest aspects, and involves a deliberate scheme of life, both here and hereafter, and a reasoned philosophical system. It may be said that what we call pure poetry is over-weighted by the didactic element, but the former is abundant enough. The similies are often strained, but few poets have displayed such a wealth of felicitous and apparently extemporaneous imagery. The image, indeed, appears to be ever ready upon his lips, and all of which we can justly complain is its abundance, an abundance which frequently cloyes. The faults of the poem, to put them briefly, are those of immaturity and of excess, never those of sterility or convention. It may be asked whether humour, that touchstone of genius, may be found in "*Festus*?" And our answer is, that though there are passages where a keener sense of humour would have saved the poet from some palpable absurdities, the faculty, along with that of bitter satire, will be found conspicuous in a remarkable scene, to which further allusion may be made.

In estimating the position of the poem, it is necessary to

consider its relation to the "Faust" of Goethe. We think it has been too easily granted that Bailey's indebtedness to Goethe was very large. No doubt the great German poem had its influence. We may well conceive the young poet, in the fervour of his ambition, being incited to attempt something of the same kind, and he may at the time have regarded "Faust" as so conspicuously a masterpiece as to warrant imitation to a certain extent. But the lines on which "Festus" is built are not those of "Faust," nor do we believe that the latter poem was the first source of inspiration. The root idea of both poems lies in the slight, but all-important, episode in the opening chapters of the Book of Job, and in the well-known "Faust Legend." It is significant that the first vacation exercise which Bailey ever wrote and submitted to his father was an essay on the "Legend," and it is probable that the subject had been working in his mind even before he became familiar with the translations of "Faust." That he had not an unqualified admiration of "Faust" we know, for in a letter setting forth his views, which he was induced to write in 1893, and which is printed in the "Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century," by Dr. Robertson Nicoll and T. J. Wise, he speaks of that poem—and not without discretion—as "a vast jumble of Greek and Gothic fable." The resemblances between the two poems are just those which would strike a reader familiar with "Faust," and having only a superficial acquaintance with "Festus." The points of difference are numerous, and are often fundamental. In "Faust," as in "Job," God proposes the trial of the human spirit; in "Festus" the proposal comes from Lucifer. In "Faust" the marvellous songs of the three Archangels, so wonderfully translated by Shelley, and which are immensely superior to any of Bailey's lyrics, are occupied with praise of the sun—and

perhaps by implication of the Creator—and of the whole round of creation, while in “Festus” the corresponding hymns of the Seraphim and Cherubim are more appropriately, if less magnificently, occupied with pure devotion. In “Faust” Mephistopheles is the mocking, and irreverent spirit; in “Festus” Lucifer is generally Milton’s fallen, but majestic, angel, though it must be admitted the conception is not consistently carried through the whole poem. The opening speech of Lucifer is essentially Miltonic:—

Ye thrones of Heaven, how bright, how pure ye are!
How have ye brightened since I saw ye first!
How have I darkened since ye saw me last!

And:—

Thou seest me here again!
Still sunlike though eclipsed.

If we compare this with the opening speech of Mephistopheles we see how entirely different is the conception:—

As thou, O Lord, once more art kind enough
To interest thyself in our affairs—
And ask, ‘How goes it with you there below?’
And as indulgently at other times
Thou tookest not my words in ill part,
Thou seest me here once more among thy household.²

Our space will not permit us to follow these points of difference in further detail; it must suffice to say that the widely divergent conception of the Tempter affects the whole course of each poem. The problems and the solutions are both different. The spirit of “Festus,” indeed, is more akin—though the relationship may be distant—to the religious feeling and the moral austerity

2. Shelley’s translation:—“Scenes from the Faust of Goethe.”

of Dante and Milton than to the flippant banter and artistic indifferentism of Goethe.

III.

Whatever may be the place which is to be assigned to "Festus" in our literature, it must at least be recognised as unique in its first draft as the work of so young a man, whether we regard the deep seriousness of its object or the vastness of its plan, or the considerable, if imperfect, realisation of the author's lofty ideal; unique also in the way in which it was unceasingly worked upon and enlarged during the course of a long life. Of no other English poem can it be said that precisely the same conditions are fulfilled.

Probably few readers of "Festus," as it appears to-day, are aware how great is the change which has been made in it since its publication in 1839. The first edition is said to have contained less than ten thousand lines; the edition of 1901 has about forty thousand. Originally there were but twenty scenes; now there are fifty-two. To compare the various editions is a bewildering task. The old scenes appear, but sometimes broken up, or under other names; while new scenes are continually interpolated. Occasionally the added material is new, but for the most part it consists of large portions taken from the author's other poems, sometimes skilfully assimilated, but often giving an impression of incongruity. Two things contributed to make this process of agglomeration tempting and comparatively easy. First, the poem is conspicuously loose in construction. It was, of course, not intended to be put on the stage like "Faust." Bailey himself never called it even a "Dramatic Poem," but on all his title-pages "A Poem" simply. There being no necessity therefore for a strict dramatic unity, the detached scenes lent themselves

with only too much facility to the work of amplification and revision. A second reason will be found in the fact that most of his later poems—especially “The Angel World” and “The Mystic,” from which the additions were chiefly taken—were pitched in the key of “Festus,” and could be readily transferred. Probably his mind had been so absorbed and captivated by one circle of ideas that it refused to work adequately in any other direction. There is evidence that at the time “Festus” was completed the poet regarded his literary career as closed. In the concluding lines he says:—

“Read this, world! He who writes is dead to thee,
But still lives in these leaves;”

and though other books were subsequently written, it is in the leaves of “Festus” only that he lives. Wisely or not, he decided to risk all his venture in one great galleon, and made it as brave as he could.

The question still remains, Was this enormous aggregation commendable? We think not. The craft was overweighted, and its cargo, though much of it was precious, became too complex.³ Considering how large a portion of the poem consists of disquisition—philosophical, metaphysical and theological—it is to be feared that few readers will now force their way through the whole. There is something pathetic in the spectacle of the poet labouring through a long life at the work—as he fondly hoped it might be—of perfecting his poem. It would have been well if some friendly critic had suggested to him another way of achieving his object. Revision should have meant condensation and the omission of irrelevant matter, as well

3. It is desirable to say here that, from his own point of view, the author considered “Festus” to be structurally a continuous whole, and perfectly ordered through all its scenes.

as expansion. It should also have included correction of the metre, which is often weak or faulty, apparently from haste in composition. These lapses are the more irritating to the reader because in most cases a slight and quite obviously desirable change would have perfected the harmony of the verse. It must not be supposed from what we have said that Bailey did not make omissions as well as expansions in the later editions, but the former were small in number compared with the latter, and sometimes, by the removal of the lighter passages, some of the life and colour of the earlier poem was lost. In the important Preface to the edition of 1889 the writer says that these omissions consisted chiefly of a few songs and lyrical effusions, and of passages which were too exclusively theological in character.⁴

The Proem, which first made its appearance in the second edition, and the Preface just alluded to, are an attempt to make the object and arrangement of the poem more intelligible to the reader, and especially to rebut the charge made against it of incoherence and want of method. The prose Preface is heavy, both in style and matter, and few will care to read it. The Proem, on the other hand, is a fine piece of work, and should not be neglected. It is written in blank verse, which is usually more correct and stately than that which occurs in the body of the work; the expressions and images are not over-strained, and some are very happy, as when it is said of Wisdom that:—

Her fare

Lacks dainties, though to all she setteth forth
Her homely bread, and hospitable wine,
And sacred salt.

4. Mr. Bailey announced his intention to reprint these songs and lyrics in a separate volume but the project was not carried out.

or again :—

Poetry is itself a thing of God ;
He made His prophets poets ; and the more
We feel of poesie do we become
Like God in love and power.

or this :—

True fiction hath in it a higher end
Than fact ; it is the possible compared
With what is merely positive, and gives
To the conceptive soul an inner world,
A higher, ampler, Heaven than that wherein
The nations sun themselves.

After alluding to the work of other poets who have striven to show God as He deals with states and kings ; or as He dealt with the first man ; or as with heaven and earth and hell, he says that his object is to shew how God loves to order a chance soul chosen out of the world, from first to last. It is a "statued mind and a naked heart which is struck out." Manners, customs, places, and times are taken no account of :—

The hero is the world-man, in whose heart
One passion stands for all.

And the concluding lines are :—

It boots not here
To palliate misdoings. 'Twere less toil
To build Colossus than to hew a hill
Into a statue. Hail and farewell, all !

These words would seem to imply that in 1845 he perceived the difficulty of the task which, nevertheless, in later years he set himself to accomplish.

It is impossible in our space to deal with the poem in detail. The scenes which follow each other, as in the first

part of "Faust," without being grouped, as they are in the second part of that drama, into successive acts, begin with "Heaven," and include "Hell," "The Millennial Earth," and "The Judgment Day," and conclude with "The Heaven of Heavens," in which Lucifer and Festus appear again before the Eternal. Festus, having passed through the furnace of temptation, is redeemed by the Son of God; Evil itself is destroyed; Lucifer and the Lost Angels are restored; and universal salvation—the idea of which runs as a connecting thread through the whole poem—is accomplished:—

The hour is named,
When seraph, cherub, angel, saint, man, fiend,
Made pure, and unbelievably uplift
Above their present state—drawn up to God,
Like dew into the air—shall be all Heaven;
And all souls shall be in God, and shall be God,
And nothing but God be.

Many of the intermediate scenes are of the most vague description—"The Surface," "The Centre," "The Air," "Space," "Everywhere"—others are localised, as "A Village Feast," "A Metropolis," "A Garden and Bower by the Sea;" and all are introduced, often with little coherence, for the purpose of presenting the various temptations through which Festus passes, or as giving opportunity for long and often finely conceived soliloquies on an endless variety of subjects secular and sacred. The poem will be seen at its best in a scene called "A Country Town and Market Place" where Lucifer, in the guise of a Ranter, delivers a satirical sermon to a mocking and indignant crowd. One of the finest passages in the poem will be found here, but it is too long for quotation. It begins: "The priest shall, dipping, die," and ends:—

Let us suppose a case, friends! You are men;
 And there is God; and I will be the Devil.
 Very well, I am the Devil.

In the same scene occur the lines spoken by Festus, which are perhaps better known than any others:—

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
 In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
 We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
 Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.
 Life's but a means unto an end—that end,
 Beginning, mean and end to all things—God.
 The dead have all the glory of the world.
 Why will we live and not be glorious?
 We never can be deathless till we die.
 It is the dead win battles; and the breath
 Of those who through the world drive like a wedge,
 Tearing earth's empires up, nears Death so close
 It dims his well-worn scythe.

Another fruitful scene is that called "Home," where a student is introduced. The subjects treated are chiefly literary. One short quotation will show their nature:—

Words are the motes of thought, and nothing more;
 Words are like sea-shells on the shore; they shew
 Where the mind ends, and not how far it has been.
 Let every thought, too, soldier-like be stripped,
 And roughly looked over; the dress of words,
 Like to the Roman girl's enticing garb,
 Should let the play of limb be seen through it,
 And the round, rising form. A mist of words,
 Like halos round the moon, though they enlarge
 The seeming size of thoughts, make the light less
 Doubly. It is the thought writ down we want,
 Not its effect.

This passage brings out two characteristics of the poem—its clear sanity, in parts at least, and its extraordinary wealth of helpful and continually recurring imagery. We can only permit ourselves one more quotation, and it must stand as a sample of numerous similar passages which show the purely poetical side of “Festus” as opposed to the didactic:—

See,

The moon is up ; it is the dawn of night,
Heaven's beauty grows on us ;
And when the elder worlds have ta'en their seats
Come the divine ones, gathering one by one,
And family by family, with still
And holy air into the house of God—
The house of light He hath builded for Himself,
And worship Him in silence and in sadness,
Immortal and immovable.

IV.

Although we have expressed the opinion that it is quite possible now to arrive at an estimate of the intrinsic value of “Festus,” it must be admitted that it is still difficult to forecast its future. We believe the later editions are, as we have already intimated, too large in bulk to secure the continued suffrage of any large body of readers. We think a facsimile reprint of the first edition might be produced as an interesting literary curiosity, and that for the general reader we should have a re-issue of the second edition (which is quite long enough) in Pickering's original form ; or of the third edition, if that be not too long, in the same excellent form ; certainly not with the disagreeable double columns which were allowed to disfigure the third edition. The book will no doubt always commend itself chiefly to three classes of readers—those

who, like the poet himself at the time of writing, stand on the vantage ground of youth, who have already entered on the conflict of life, and are not without their scars, but who still retain the ennobling passion of hope; or those who care to thread the intricate paths of "divine philosophy" or to muse among the dreams of a mystical religion; and again, those who believe in that which was symbolised by the device on the early title-pages of "*Festus*," to which we have already alluded—the final triumph of good over evil, "The one, far off, divine event to which the whole creation moves." If an estimate in brief may be ventured upon, we should say that "*Festus*" is an opulent mine filled with a great store of poetry and philosophy, which, however, are often only to be found in a crude state. That there was behind the poem a noble life, self-dedicated and strenuous in the pursuit of all that was good and beautiful, cannot be doubted.

In the summer of last year it was proposed that Mr. Bailey should visit Manchester, as the guest of the Literary Club. The fact that the first edition of his book was issued in the northern city seemed to give a sufficient reason for the visit. Unfortunately the project fell through. Mr. Bailey was in his eighty-seventh year, and, although until quite recently he had been wonderfully vigorous, both in mind and body, a sharp illness in the spring made a great change, and very regretfully he recognised that it would not be wise to face the fatigue of the journey from Nottingham and the excitement of a public reception. Still he clung to the idea, and thought that after a sojourn at the seaside in the summer he might, after all, accept the invitation. He had always avoided public ceremonials, but his interest in Manchester was of an affectionate kind, and from the first he showed a singular pleasure in thinking of the proposed visit as

reminiscent of his far-off youth. It was not to be, however. He was tenderly cared for—as he had been for many years—by a devoted niece, who also acted as his amanuensis—Miss Fanny C. Carey; but in the month of August he began to sink. One thing after another had to be given up—his drive into the country and by the river Trent, which he loved so much—like Wordsworth's Derwent, the dream of his early youth—the short walk in his pleasant garden, then the study and his books, and the still continued revision of "*Festus*." All the while he thought himself to be "mending," and was ever cheerful, thankful, and patient. The end came on the 6th of September. He was interred in the Cemetery at Nottingham after a service in St. Andrew's Church. A hymn—"Call all who love Thee, Lord, to Thee"—taken from "*Festus*" was sung, and the private announcement of his death appropriately bore the following lines from the same poem:—

Whose thoughts, like bars of sunshine in shut rooms,
'Mid gloom and glory win the world to light;
And, like the young moon with a ragged edge,
Still, in their imperfection, beautiful.
Men whom we build our love round like an arch
Of triumph, as they pass us on their way
To glory and to immortality;
Men whose great thoughts possess us like a passion,
Through every limb and the whole heart; whose words
Haunt us, as eagles haunt the mountain air.





PAUL SCARRON.

By EDMUND MERCER.

IN the reign of the fourteenth Louis, matters of literature, art, music, and manners, including vice, stalked through France—aristocratic France (there was no other just now)—on stilts. In the neighbourhood of Paris Nature herself was accommodated with a pair. A frigid regularity took the place of the charming disorder of life, and nothing, not even a breach of the seventh commandment, was properly performed except with due regard to fixed and unalterable rules. This was called good taste. Good taste is a good thing; but like all good things it is liable to abuse. Even truth for some people may be too little wrapped up. Louis himself had a morbid horror of undisguised truth in intellectual affairs, and his arbitration upon these being omnipotent, it was good taste to suppress truth. Accordingly his influence was not exactly happy. The peruke of the little monarch towered over other peoples' intelligence; his personal desires and meaner capacity ousting the ideas of more capable minds. It is hardly possible to concede average good sense to a man who considered himself the state, and once benignantly allowed himself to be compared with the sun. To such inordinate egotism, backed with the lying adulation of an army of sycophants, the author who would be successful must bow. His sole aim must be the glory of the King; he

must please the King; amuse the King; praise the King; paint the King; sculpture the King; or, if his work in whatever art should be inconsistent with any of these high and mighty matters, he must in some way preface or accompany it with letters of prostration to the king, or some meaner minion, who had the ear of the monarch on the side that was not deaf. An expression, *à fortiori*, a whole work, not sanctioned by the Court was admitted nowhere. Albeit a word from Monsieur le Duc or a smile from Madame la Marquise was often sufficient to bring into fashion a book, however extravagant or puerile. The language, thus misguided, naturally suffered from an access of prudery in expression (not at all incompatible with obscenity of meaning) and a preciosity in ideas, the euphuism of French literature. Familiarity of written diction frightened fashion and was prescribed accordingly. The literary tongue thus became an abstruse dialect affected by the would-be wise, beyond the comprehension of all those without the Court and most of those within. There was no probability of a literary rebellion, because whatever a Frenchman's bravery in battle, at this period he was very timid on paper. No one dared begin though many a one was willing to follow. To be stigmatised as original was a particularly injurious thing for a new author; and a Frenchman would rather suffer death than ridicule. For the latter reason was Scarron able to blackmail, neither more or less, many of the celebrities of his day. Flattery was an article of commerce which even the great Condé and the Coadjutor de Retz were not unwilling to purchase from him; the alternative being the most vitriolic satire as difficult of removal as the stink of civet. Even the King's stepfather, Mazarin, contemptuous alike of flattery and its author, found that Scarron's pen was something more than a feather, and (despite his champion

Cyrano, whose vituperation for the defence was even more corrosive than that of the attack) also learned that it would have been cheaper and easier to satisfy Scarron than undo the damage he suffered from the machinations of the Fronde who made Scarron's house their headquarters. Hence it is that Scarron was beyond the governance of the arbitrary rules affecting the rest of intellectual France. He had the advantage of being an established institution by the time young Louis had learned to spell, and as much accepted by the King as the law of gravity; though to Scarron gravity was an exception and not a law. In this, as in all else, he was singular. He had an elder brother of the same name who died young, thus avoiding confusion to posterity. The first half of his life was spent in tasting its best juices; the latter half in flavouring them, sweet or bitter, for others. His existence was a treaty between life and death. His literary strength lay in burlesque; his physical weakness twisted his body into a burlesque of the human form. Most active in temperament he was compelled to be a mere spectator of the farce of life. Though making much money he was always poor. He, a man to whom morality was a jest, and religion a method of obtaining a living, was created an Abbé; and this Abbé, though bound to celibacy, committed matrimony. In his later days he was less pretty than a gargoyle, yet his beautiful helpmate was an exception to the prevailing conjugal infidelity. The more he suffered the better he jested. His language was that of a century later than his time. He is best remembered by the two works he left unfinished, and his wife by another name. His death was almost a comedy; and it was not every poor devil of a burlesque poet whose widow could marry a King of France.

Paul Scarron, otherwise Paul the martyr (uncanonised), was the younger of the two sons of the same name, of Paul

Scarron, facetiously known amongst his fellow-counsellors of Parliament as Paul the Apostle, after his favourite author. This Apostle, an excellent and wealthy legal gentleman, was weak enough to commit two unnecessary follies; he provided little Paul and his two sisters with an avaricious, tyrannical stepmother, and by-and-bye with three other brothers and sisters, and then gratuitously offended Richelieu, who deprived him of his office and emoluments, and honoured him with exile to Touraine. The former event for ever destroyed the peace of the Scarron household. Paul the little at once declared war against the invader. For the first few years he acted on the defensive, but later carried the battle into the enemy's camp with such vigour that paternal intervention became imperative, and he was despatched with a blessing and a liberal annual allowance to the house of a relative in Charleville. Here a bizarre, cross-eyed destiny made him, without a single qualification for the office, an Abbé, for the nonce without a benefice. On his part it was purely a commercial speculation, and it would seem to have been not at all an unremunerative one. The black robe and its trimmings made a sufficiently pretty costume which bound him to nothing. He might wear a rapier and be a duellist if he chose; his raiment need not interfere with such a choice though it was excuse enough for declining a challenge. To the gay world generally it merely signified that he had pretensions to literature or to some good dividend-paying benefice. Moreover it possessed one advantage of doubtful value. With boudoir doors so modestly closed to the temporality, it was "open sesame" at the approach of the bright eyes and pretty teeth of Monsieur l'Abbé. So in his twenty-third year we find the Abbé Scarron resident in the house of Monseigneur Charles de Beaumanoir, Bishop of Mans. Young, lithe

and active, a good dancer, brilliant in conversation, an agreeable versifier, skilled on the lute, an amateur painter of no mean attainment, well equipped for taking a prominent place in a gallant and witty society whose sole business was pleasure and art its recreation, he was well received everywhere, especially at the houses of Marion de Lorme and Ninon de Lenclos, the two not immaculate lionesses of the period.

Accompanying his bishop to Rome he struck up the oddest kind of a friendship with Nicolas Poussin the painter, which, strangely enough—perpetual comedy of errors as it was—lasted his life long. Poussin, of austere temperament, could never understand Scarron; Scarron the wit always, but wrongly, thought he understood Poussin. Scarron, in France, throughout his life was under the impression that, in presenting Poussin with his volumes of grotesqueries, he was doing him a favour by making him laugh; whilst over in Italy, poor Poussin, out of respect to his literary friend, accepting the works with the customary thanks, after studying them in all seriousness, complained to Mignard the actor in a sense of overwhelming bewilderment, that he didn't know why Scarron sent him these things, he could make neither head nor tail of them. On the other hand, in reply to Scarron's order for a picture, the choice of subject to be left to the painter, Poussin, bearing in mind the verbal gaities of the poet, wrote him suggesting something bacchanalian. Scarron, horrified, would have none of it; he demanded something sacred, something—it must have been hereditary—from the life of his apostolic namesake, and Poussin produced for him that masterpiece of art, now in the Louvre—"The Apotheosis of St. Paul." On his return to France our little Abbé's instalment in the house of the Canonry of Mans had no effect on his insobriety of demeanour, and he

continued his life of carelessness and pleasure, amongst the delicate epicurisms of Saint Evrémont, the sallies of Chapelle, the bacchic raptures of Bachaumont, gaining only in freedom of converse, and the power of bringing a smile even to lips consecrated to austerity. But all this was at end one Carnival time. With a sudden twist of destiny's kaleidoscope he was metamorphosed from a sprightly, slim, handsome youth into what he called "an abridgment of human misery." From his description we see him thus:—

My person was well-made though short, my disorder has shortened it still more by a foot. My head is a little broad for my figure; my face is full enough for my body to appear very meagre. I have hair enough to render a wig unnecessary, and I possess many white hairs in spite of the proverb. My teeth, formerly square pearls, are now of the colour of wood, and will soon be like slate. My calves and thighs first formed an obtuse angle, later an equilateral angle, and at last an acute one. My thighs and body form another, and my head always drooping on my breast makes me not ill represent a Z. My arms are shortened to match my legs and my fingers to match my arms.

The origin of this disorder is as mysterious as that of Mr. Yellowplush, and (apart from its cause) none of the physicians of the time, with all the symptoms before them, could so much as name it. Like everything pertaining to Scarron it was unique. According to Tallement he was the victim of a quack drug which rendered him impotent in an attempt to cure some "youthful ailment" arising from his licentious life. We may discount this if only because Tallement had such a dear regard for a bit of scandal. Nevertheless, the fact of the licentious living remains, as Cyrano attests, though his contempt of Scarron might suggest exaggeration were it not that he was con-

sistently veracious and his testimony supported by others. Goujet describes the disease as an acrid humour distilling itself on his nerves and baffling his physicians. Whatever Goujet meant by this vague definition he is right as to the failure of the medical men. Another contemporary asserts with praiseworthy precision that it was an attack of fever conjoined with rheumatism, and mismanaged by the doctors; whilst an eminent French surgeon of to-day thinks that the symptoms, so far as he understands them, all pointed to tuberculosity of the spine, causing a kind of creeping paralysis beginning in the feet. Scarron tells us that he knows neither its cause nor nature, but admits that:—

Pleasure deprived me suddenly of legs which had danced with elegance, and of hands which could manipulate the pencil and the lute.

In the face of this we can afford to disbelieve La Beaumelle's cock-and-bull story (in which most of Scarron's biographers take so much delight) that the disorder was the result of a Carnival freak at Mans where Scarron, stripped to the skin, anointed himself with some sticky substance, rolled in a bursted feather bed and appeared in the streets as a new kind of bird. The populace, mad with laughter, paid him so many unpleasant attentions that he, a new waterfowl, hid among the reeds in the marshes of the Sarthe till night, when he crawled home racked with pain. The freak is quite worthy of Scarron. Frank to bluntness in his own affairs he was not the man to hide such a jest; as he says not a word about it, we can congratulate La Beaumelle on his imagination. Whatever the cause of the disease and whatever its nature, the effect of it was that we find Scarron with a body shaped like a Z, his head askew on his left

shoulder, with the free use of nothing but his eyes, ears, nose, tongue, hands and brains, perched in a special chair, portfolio on knees, where he was doomed to sit for twenty-two years a spectator of the play wherein he had been so gay a player; growing as bizarre in spirit, as deformed in body. With a resignation amounting to despair he settled himself to wrench from the hands of life even the veriest tittle it had still to offer him. His heroism—sordid, bruised, at-bay kind of heroism though it was—compels our admiration; his rare and indefatigable courage, brooking no suggestion of pity nor showing the least pretence of capitulating to religion, made a jest—a thousand jests—of his misfortunes with an incredible gaiety. We may suspect this gaiety a masquerade behind which glimpses of the man himself appeared at long intervals when his patience perhaps wore a little thin. To Marigny he wrote :—

I swear to you, my dear friend, if I were permitted merely to suppress myself, I would not be long in taking poison.

And again :—

If all the devils would only be kind enough to come and carry me off, I think I would try to meet them half-way.

Such moments as these seem, fortunately, to have been rare; or, was Scarron's acting singularly consistent? His petulance turned in time to genial cynicism which only flashed out on those who misunderstood his attitude to himself. Far from being a man of whom one dared insinuate that he "suffered without complaint," his spirit, fighting against his relentless physical fate grew more indomitable with custom till it would barely admit even such a thing as suffering. "If there is a hell," he once poured out to a cleric who offered consolation in the stereo-

typed way, "It will not be for me, who have had my hell a thousand times over on earth." He acclimatised himself to his hell very well indeed. "I am crippled," said he, "and I have no thighs. You might put me on a table in a needle-case where I could talk like a one-eyed magpie." For the Queen he drew this picture:—

Only beneath me can I see,
I'm wrynecked and my head is pendulous,
My figure is so ludicrous
That though folk laugh they never anger me.

And in another place:—

Among the wrynecks of this City
I pass for one of the most pretty.

One cannot pity a man whose cheerfulness so out-Tapley's Tapley. Even a lawsuit, on which his very living and that of his sisters depended, does not seem to have embittered him against anyone except the defendants, his stepmother and her progeny. This was the final battle in the wars of the Scarrons and ended in the defeat of Paul the Martyr, about the time of whose illness Paul the Apostle died. Being a lawyer he naturally omitted to make his own will, and left his affairs in considerable confusion. His eldest son lying on a sick bed, Madame the Stepmother appropriated everything with the usual consequences. Scarron conducted his own case in spite of the legal maxim, and so drew up his documents in the best burlesque style, and with so refreshing a joviality that the judges decided against him. The world could not conceive how a man could so pleasantly amuse himself with so serious a subject.

Our jester must live. Though paralytic he could not renounce his practical epicurism. "I have always been a little passionate," he writes, "a little gourmand, and a

little idle." His seizure seems to have had a respect for his appetite, since it was remarked that his stomach had gained the life that had deserted the rest of his body. He therefore turned to his pen and his wits, the former had hitherto only practised desultorily, but the latter were as acute as ever. The two together produced occasional verse of a sufficiently marketable quality to secure bread. His Letters—dedicatory invariably—brought him something in return, whilst his Petitions—begging letters pure and simple,—thickly sauced with flattery and a most mournful picture of poverty, remained seldom unanswered in specie or its equivalent. In these the cry was give, give, anything, everything, and they show Scarron to be surely the most indefatigable asker that ever lived. He demanded a medley of things; money, an abbey, a lodging at Court, firewood, books, a carriage, pies, capons, cheese, dogs, and so forth. Strangely enough his correspondents sent him nearly all he asked for, which he accepted with a gratitude that overflowed into letters of thanks and requests for more. It was this same Abbé Scarron who was particularly severe on tuft-hunters, and mocked with gleeful satire the greed of the Courtiers and the requests they made in their dedicatory epistles. One apologist says that:—

He at least solicited with an air of gaiety and good humour which generally eliminated all appearance of business from his requests, rendered still more excusable by his cruel infirmity.

There is really no need for any excuse of this kind. One may as well be frank. Poetical mendicancy was a fashionable trade and it was sound commercial policy on Scarron's part to decry his rivals' wares.

With an income of such a variegated kind he now tried

all manner of things by way of cure for his ailments, and he was the more emboldened in these attempts since death was the only cure that could be worse than the disease. Waters at Bourbon and elsewhere, drugs, charms, even a bath of warm tripe, all had their ineffectual trial. Scarron confessed that the only thing that did him any real and lasting good was to swear, a method he recommended to all his friends as peculiarly efficacious.

An expected source of income to Scarron was a certain pecuniary value he set upon his title of Abbé, since he might one day have a benefice upon which to sustain it. He preferred a request for something of the kind to Richelieu, in a very flattering letter, which the recipient said was very pleasantly dated, and replied that the Abbé was in no condition to perform the duties attaching to the post. Scarron's answer that he did not want any duties to perform but an abbacy or benefice so simple that he need only believe in God to deserve it was characteristic. There is little doubt that, but for Richelieu's death, he would have received from him what he obtained a year later from the Queen, the Canonry of Mans of which he had been Abbé gratuitously for just ten years. He lived in his canonical house two years and then removed to Paris. In the meantime the loose leaves—one may use the adjective in its double sense—of his poetry were gathered together in book form and printed. I say "poetry" advisedly, though I do not wish any inference of quality to be taken from it. "*Des poésies diverses*" was his own title, and a man may be a real poet even though he lack the soporific degree of turgidity necessary to constitute him a standard poet. At Mans also he wrote that elephantine jest in five cantos, "*Typhon ou la Gigantomachie*," the wars of the gods and giants, the origin of which was a contentious game of skittles among the giants,

of whom Typhon lost his temper through receiving one of the skittle-balls—a toy as big as Snowdon—on his toes and flung it so high that it burst through the “cerulean dome” and alighted on the banqueting table of the gods, creating considerable havoc amongst Juno’s best crockery. This he dedicated to that rising orb Mazarin, who received the flattery with a scarcely veiled contempt, though he bestowed on the writer a pension just small enough to err on the mean side. Scarron could hardly be grateful for a pittance given with the grace that flings a beggarly crust to a prowling cur, but touched to the quick, remembered this thing when the avaricious Cardinal had angered all around him: of which more later. This buffoonery had success sufficient to encourage Scarron to the bolder foolery of the “*Virgile Travesti*.” The man-in-the-street who could as much as spell enjoyed it hugely, for the language was that of every-day Paris with its clothes off. The literary world, however, could not quite fathom it, and it is as amusing in a way as the jest itself to read the disapproval of a critic made in all seriousness:—“It broke the bounds of a sustained and severe style.”

The principal part of Scarron’s life, both literary and natural, dates from his return in 1646, to Paris, where he installed himself successively in the Rue d’Enfers, Rue de Douze-Portes, au Marais and Rue de la Tixanderie, and betook himself to occupations and a style of life more conformable to his character. With an increase of his literary output he received an increasing revenue from his publisher, Quinet, whose house he styled his “*Marquisate of Quinet*.” As he could not go out to his jolly companions they were welcomed at his house, whose doors were open to almost everyone, and there he held his brilliant, light-witted but loose-tongued court, a crooked Mahomet, monarch of paralytics, surrounded by a crowd of literary

friends Sarrazin, Segrais, Tristan l'Ermite, Cyrano de Bergerac, Ménage, Madame de Sévigné, Mademoiselle de Scudéry, and the rest, and a world of notabilities, Marechal d'Albret, Comte de Grammont, Cardinal de Retz, Madame de la Fayette, Ninon de Lenclos, Marion de Lorme and lesser stars in the court firmament who, after Scarron's introduction by Madame de Hautefort to the Queen (whose permission he had to bear the official title of "the Queen's invalid," supported, of course, by a pension), made the cripple's house a fashionable as well as literary resort. At first these joyous re-unions were merry feasts where each guest contributed—after the manner of a country picnic—a share of the eatables and drinkables. These contributions were afterwards commuted by a series of pecuniary pensions to the host who, thus in receipt of a considerable fortune, was able to maintain his establishment on a scale befitting the quality and quantity of the guests. At table Scarron proved to the full that paralysis had not touched his stomach nor his tongue. He enjoyed unimpaired agility of mind, his ideas were clear, his wit of the sharpest, his temper of the gayest. However broken in body, sleepless or suffering, this cripple, always ready for a joke, always gay, pleasant, good-humored, with repartees of varying acidity or sweetness at his tongue tip, magnet-like drew all Paris in his direction. His domestic cares fell on the shoulders of his two sisters, one of whom, as he observed, "loved wine, the other men." The latter, it is not surprising to note, presented her brother with a nephew, "*à la mode du Marais*," which being interpreted signified at the time "without the incumbrance of a husband." Scarron, immoral in his days of strength, unmoral in his weaker time, took to the boy, and merely made jests of his sisters' reputation; nothing extraordinary at a period when a woman's worse fault was chastity.

This merry life was in every way compatible with the composition of the "*Virgile Travesti*" which our Abbé, one would think, flung off in the odd moments when his tongue idled. This task, ignoble as one may term it, was cleverly executed. Compared with the original it is merely a wonderful composition of air and pepper—but such air and such pepper. Instead of gods and goddesses, heroes in armour, and damsels of classic mould, we are of earth, and follow the extravagant and bucolic adventures and loves of Audreys and Williams, Colin at the ploughtail, and Phyllis in the dairy. The measured swing and sonorousness of the Latin Hexameter give way to the dancing rollick of French octosyllabics, and the stately Roman tongue is replaced by the colloquialisms of the Halles. It is in every respect pure burlesque, travesty, parody, call it what you will. Whatever may be one's opinion as to the legitimacy of parodying such a classic as the *Æneid*, or as to the material limits of a parody in point of length—this is an unfinished prank in eight books, each as long as those of Virgil—there can be little doubt that as a burlesque it serves for a model. If the rules—are there such by the way?—of parody prescribe a humorous and witty exaggeration of the form, matter, metre, style, mannerisms, and faults of a work, employed in so discriminating a fashion and with so keen a critical insight that the parody points unmistakably to the original, and yet does not demean it for us, then is this Epic of Burlesques to its original as an ape to a man. Though in the main of irresistible comicality we often discover a fine literary criticism hiding in its parody, and here and there in its simplicity and naturalness, or among incongruities there flashes upon us a single line of literal translation of a beauty far exceeding the best among the serious versions. Scarron here shows all the now familiar tricks of the parodist; a

fecundity of strange rhymes for almost impossible words, the splitting of words in order to rhyme the earlier portion, peculiar turns of phrase, changes of accent and invention of words to suit the metre, all these are here. Though the scansion may be anything the metre is octosyllabics. These he used in such an eccentric manner that they have become unchangeably associated with burlesque or humour, and are still known in France as "burlesque verses." So the book published about this time, "The Passion of our Lord in burlesque verses," is not so unsanctified as it might seem even in France, it merely meant in eight-syllabled lines. The nearest approach to the "Virgile Travesti" in English literature is "Hudibras," of which Butler published the first part fourteen years after the first book of "Virgile," which took English taste by the forelock, though Cotton's version of Book I. and IV. did not appear till fifteen years after Butler's epic. The comparison between these works of Butler and Scarron is absolutely complete as to style, metre, manner, rhythm, rhyme, and all else except brilliance and wit, in which Scarron was superlative.

There was an ancient sage philosopher
Who had read Alexander Ross over.

Had these been in French I should have said Scarron was the perpetrator; and there is little doubt that *Hudibras* was quite worthy the Scarronic lines:—

Be ever just and fear the gods:
This maxim may be very well,
But tell me, what's its use in hell?

No question of imitation arises. Scarron was dead before "Hudibras" was born; and Butler's burlesque is too direct a satire on the puritans to owe anything to the "Virgile."

This protracted joke—it was four years long and published in one book at a time—met with extraordinary success, and sped into many editions. The Queen enjoyed it; and the Chancellor Seguier revelled in its absurdities so openly that Scarron paid him that costly and dubious honour of dedicating to him the second book. St. Simon—anything after the etiquette of Versailles—considered it a jest in the best taste, and Racine, spite of the gods and Boileau, read it with roars of laughter. There is no doubt Boileau himself read it on the sly and smiled; though *poseur* in poetry as he was, he would only admit having studied it as part of his business; besides, “Scarron had merit,” said he, “which though it appeared but at intervals, was uncommon.”

The French mind always had, and still cherishes, a more or less secret leaning towards burlesque; and finds something to laugh at in even the most serious matters. The same mind has also a passion for imitation. Once let a fashion be started from its earth and it is followed to the death. If the English had not decapitated King Charles, it has been said that Louis the Sixteenth might have lived to die a natural death. Burlesque became fashionable through Scarron, whose wit fitted him to accomplish naturally the accomplishment that others had to acquire. The world is always ready to pay well for laughter, and Scarron was, happily, ready to supply it. It may be thus guessed that in the fair garden of French literature, burlesque, like weeds, smothered cultivation. To use another metaphor Scarron was the stone that started the avalanche—and no matter what came in its way, nothing was spared or sacred from its rush. Burlesque was used even for the purposes of religious instruction; though the would-be Scarrons made the mistake of thinking that to be a buffoon it was only necessary to speak in that coarse and

oath-laden language peculiar to the neighbourhood of Fish Markets.

Scarron, in his eccentric and unexpected fashion, dropped a bombshell amongst his apes, by the expression of a hope that the Academy—then in its early youth—would interfere to suppress the rampant spirit of burlesque, adding:—"For my part I am ready to forswear a style that has spoiled the world." And he did forswear, but only after adding two more books to his version of the "*Æneid*."

In the midst of this comic *furor* Scarron's house became the headquarters of satire and epigram, and eventually a magazine of ammunition for the Frondeurs. It would seem that many of the wits of the day joined the Fronde not because of any real hatred of Mazarin, but from a desire to exercise their puny powers of sarcasm and sting at the expense of someone sufficiently high in the world, and at the same time powerless, to bring their little effusions into a prominence otherwise unattainable. A scandal in Court will sell more papers than one in an alley. Here Dassoucy, Blot, Cyrano and others met to improve the shining hour, until someone other than Cyrano or Blot (whom Mazarin had bought with a pension) lampooned the Cardinal in the best political pamphlet of the time "*La Mazarinade*," a piece of satire in which burlesque gave way to ferocity—Juvenal without his honest indignation. For Scarron it was the worst thing that he did if he were indeed the writer. He repudiated it most indignantly, and we may credit him with honesty in this; but as it issued from his coterie, and Mazarin, with his usual astucy, aimed his revenge at the Chief and not at the minions. He cut off his pension to Scarron and the Queen hers; Scarron received a larger one from Fouquet, but he was no longer the Queen's invalid. Also, as we have seen, Cyrano, by

way of retaliation for being drawn into such iniquitous company, wrote the most bitter of his many open letters, addressed to Scarron, whom he called:—

A frog croaking in the marshes of Parnassus; a living example of the vengeance of God; his body bent like a gibbet on which the devil had hung a soul; his language so vile that if the Halles tongue should change Scarron would not be understood; and if death were to dance a sarabande he would take a pair of Scarrons for castanets.

There was no answer.

In the intervals of "Virgile" Scarron, surely the most fecund and untiring of writers, besides producing many volumes of verse of his average merit, easy, pleasant, amusing for the most part, often descending into a slough of scurrilousness, or rising, on occasions, to a respectable level of nobility, or delicacy of sentiment, wrote for the stage a number of comedies, all of which were acted and none of them a failure. These were in rhyming hexameters, and obeyed neither the rules of Aristotle nor the laws of the unities, but because it suited the author's style, they rather followed the six fundamentals of Lope da Vega, more especially since the plots of all were laid in Spain. There must be one scene in a street, another in a garden, a third in a room or balcony, duels, chance meetings, a substitution of persons, masks and dark lanterns are essentials; without a silly valet or other stupid bourgeois, the comedy would not be worth playing; and one must be poetical and sentimental in the love passages and as loose as one likes elsewhere. Scarron, free from the trammels of precisianism, showed unwonted ease and alertness, and an irrepressible gaiety, amounting at times to farcical buffoonery. In his first comedy "Jodelet" he burlesqued the language of "The Cid" in that mock tragic

speech beginning:—"Be clean, my teeth: 'tis honour thus commands." All his characters are remarkable for clear outline and life-like expression. They are natural enough to drop things, to ask the time, tell stories, feel cold, and suffer from a number of trifles, as was not the wont of the puppets of the French stage at this time. Moreover, they required almost no stage directions, since their speech foreshadowed the situations. The chief faults of all these plays were their loose dramatic construction, and their patched-up conclusions. The most humorous and famous was that in which Cyrano was here and there burlesqued "Don Japhet of Armenia." It was the favourite of young Louis when he was fifteen, and forty years after the death of its author when his young wife had become Louis' old one, Louis still took pleasure in it. With his death the last of Scarron's plays disappeared from the *repertoire* of the best Comedy Companies.

When Scarron became a novelist he still busied himself with players. What induced him to try his hand at a form of literature so distinct from anything he had hitherto seriously attempted, seems to have been the success which awaited his very free translation of short stories by Spanish authors. They are quite as interesting as those scattered through "Don Quixote." Molière that literary imperialist, annexed the better part of "Les Hypocrites" for his "Tartufe," as both Sedaine and Beaumarchais for their plays did by "La Précaution Inutile." It was quite in order for Scarron, a brilliant Spanish scholar, to model, more or less, his only novel, like his plays, on something Spanish. The Picaroon Romance seems to have been his inspiration for style, as was Don Quixote for plan, since, like Cervantes, he had several stories set in the frame of the main one. "Le Roman Comique" broke new ground in France as perhaps also in

England. As Cervantes crushed the foolish stories of Knight errantry, so did Scarron scatter the forces of the interminable historical novel and the metaphysical love-sick romance. His particular red rag was the novel of heroics peculiar to France. This was just now reaching the height of its prosperity and the extreme of its turgidity together: Madame Scudéry having delivered her mind of that tremendous abortion "*Clélie*," the most awful specimen of this class of fiction, the ten volumes of which occupied five years in publication. What marvellous patience the novel reader of the day must have exercised, and what a waste of the good material of paper and time on the part of the Scudéry! I have said Scarron's novel broke new ground; it was not only the first attempt in France to depict life as it was, but the pioneer of a style of fiction in which Le Sage, Defoe, Fielding, Smollett and even Dickens in the "*Pickwick Papers*" were such excellent adventurers. It is merely the recital of the adventures and at the same time a picture of the manners of a troop of strolling players whom Scarron met at Mans, and amongst whose company he is said to have first seen Molière. Its main defect was that it had no particular beginning, no particular aim, it led nowhere, and was never finished, though the last item mattered not since it is complete as it stands, and there was no special reason why it should end, except when its author laid aside his pen for ever. He wrote the scenes as they occurred to him with no more of a pre-conceived plan than can be credited to Sterne, who, by-the-way, was very much taken with this novel, every page of which is redolent with the sunshiny air of old provincial France. Scarron loved his characters who, on the whole were very well behaved. He described them as though they were flesh and blood—possibly they were, they live so much—and their dress, thoughts, and subtler feelings, with a care

which would have done even Chaucer credit. Many of the inmates of the inn at Mans for simplicity, picturesqueness, gaiety, and naturalness, might sit side by side with the company of mine host of the Tabard. The style of the narrative and incidents is in Scarron's best vogue, neither too elevating nor too debased. Unlike that of the heroic novel his language did not descend to pomposity, nor further still to vulgarity. He was simply natural, writing with a sobriety, directness and a happiness of phrase peculiar to him. With freedom and attraction of style, unbounded gaiety, a language supple and accommodated to the exigencies of the tale, and though broadly humorous, yet not lacking in a certain tender grace, and poesy in the love scenes need we say it was a success and is a classic, and that many of its characters are types? As a matter of course someone totally unfitted for the task tried to finish it as was the case with "*Don Quixote*" in precopyright times. The *Sieur d'Offray's* work is only remembered by a particular happy criticism of it and its author in three words: "sacrilege on paper." "*Le Roman Comique*" was translated into several languages. There were two versions in English: one by Tom Brown, and another attributed to Goldsmith, though the latter is doubtful. *La Fontaine* who, no matter what his merit as a fabulist, or his demerit as a writer of salacious verse, possessed the knack of making atrocious plays out of good material, constructed a very bad comedy out of a capital character in the story, and *Le Tellier d'Orvilliers* turned the entire novel into verse, following his original so faithfully that a strong flavour of prose pervades his effort.

Scarron's charitable marriage in 1652 with a girl of sixteen, *Mademoiselle Françoise d'Aubigné*, who, as *Madame de Maintenon*, became a real but unacknowledged Queen of France, lost him his canonry on his

wedding day, and with it the income from his benefice, but he made up for it by working and living more furiously for the eight years he survived his marriage. It is difficult to take his poverty seriously when he takes it so lightly; yet though not as poor as he would make believe, and though he did suffer the tortures of Job with the exemplary degree of patience attributed to that martyr, he was not at any rate compelled to suffer "sitting on a dung heap scratching his boils with a pots-herd." No! his room at the Hotel de l'Impecuniosité, as he headed his letters, was draped in yellow velvet, his food was delicate, his wine of the best, his servants many, his conversation brilliant, his friends were all around him, and he paid his way. But there was a fly in the amber. Just before his marriage he was afraid of nothing but ridicule; just before his death his only fear was that he would leave his young wife, beautiful and honourable, and to whom he was devotedly attached, with little resources, and his last fear fell true.

Queen Christina, of Sweden, in 1659, visited him and dubbed him the "gayest man in Paris," but a year later the gayest man in Paris was dying, and dying appropriately. He was attacked with a violent hiccough. "If ever I recover," said he between the spasms, "I will write a satire against the hiccough." "My children," he remarked to his sorrowing servants, "you will never weep for me so much as I have made you laugh." The last phrase that the man who caused more laughter and laughed less than any in France, was heard to utter, was on laughter: "I never thought it was so easy a matter to laugh at the approach of death." The race between satire and death was won by death. This poor devil of a laughter-maker composed his own epitaph—of which some idea is given below. It has the merit of being the most beautiful

poem he wrote, though it is fittingly written in "burlesque verses." For the beauty I refer readers to the original:—

He who now resteth here beneath
 Made pity more than envy rife,
 A thousand times he suffered death
 Before he parted from his life.
 Pray, passer, let your step be light
 Lest you disturb his slumber deep:
 For, know, this is the first sweet night
 That blest poor, worn Scarron, with sleep.

Some French critics think that Scarron was the inventor or creator of burlesque. Possibly because the word "burlesque" was not brought into France from Italy till 1640, when Sarrazin first applied it to Scarron. They overlook the fact that the thing called "burlesque" was in existence before Scarron—Rabelais and Janotus de Bragmardo for instance—though it passed under the name of "grotesque." Scarron was only the populariser of the style, and its best exponent, and really the last, as he was the first, of his peculiar manner. Hence, having neither literary ancestor nor progeny, he is above all others the type for burlesque. The method died with him. Dassoucy tried to fit his little head with Scarron's old hat, and styled himself "Emperor of burlesque," but he was haunted by the shade of Cyrano for the ape affair at Pont Neuf and Boileau crushed him and Dulot, and the rest of the stupids with a word.

Scarron may seem to be here depicted as a man passing long days and longer nights mocking his ills, and so to say, revenging himself on beauty of all kinds, physical and intellectual, by grotesques and burlesques. Let us be just though it be but a word. He had a veneration for higher things and for real beauty; witness his choice of a now famous picture. In spite of his sisters' wayward characters

he kept them both beside him, and defied shame with a shameless jest. Céleste Palaiseau, a young girl with whom he had fallen in love in early youth, having retired to the convent of the Conception, in Paris, was, with a companion, maintained by him in his crippled age for many years when the bankruptcy of the convent closed its doors to them. On receiving his benefice of Mans he made her Prioress of Argenteuil. He married his wife out of pure charity when poverty left her the choice between a convent and the streets of the most licentious capital of its time, and always out of his abundance, when he had it, he gave freely. In spite of his canonry, and though he was anything but religious, I do not think he will be found jesting with aught that is really sacred.

He was fond of the work of *Cornéille*, and it is said he himself intended to write a tragedy. No doubt this would not have been the least merry of his many jests.





IN THE KINGSLEY COUNTRY.

By TINSLEY PRATT.

NEAR where the rivers Tamar and Tavy meet, a little above the broad channel of the Hamoaze, and flow with a gentle motion towards the open waters of Plymouth Sound, stands the little parish of St. Budeaux. To-day it is but a straggling place, and stands well removed from the busy seaport which lies a few miles to the south. But three hundred years ago, when the little place was intimately associated with Sir Francis Drake, it consisted of a few scattered dwellings, thatched and timbered after the picturesque manner of the time, with here and there an outlying farm or so, and a few houses of greater pretensions, of which Tavy Court was the chief, then in the occupation of a baronet of Cornish descent, by name Sir Roger Trevanion. The roadway approaching St. Budeaux mounts somewhat steeply uphill, and at that period the ascent was crowned by the church—a modest house of prayer, with a square, battlemented tower overlooking the short stretch of lush meadowlands that slope down to the waterside.

By the courtesy of the present Vicar of St. Budeaux I was able, from the upper windows of the Vicarage to command a wide prospect of the surrounding country. Northwards the eye traverses the pastoral valleys of the twin rivers, with the woods of Warleigh in the near distance,

and far beyond these, rolling into apparently limitless space, loom the misty uplands of Dartmoor. To the left stretch the meadows and orchards over beyond Landulph and Botus Fleming, while miles away spread the high slopes of Hingston Down, rising in the far distance to the misty summit of Kit Hill. Says Charles Kingsley :

What if the spectators who last summer gazed with just pride upon the noble port of Plymouth, its vast breakwater spanning the Sound, its arsenals and docks, its two Estuaries filled with gallant ships, and watched the great screw-liners turning within their own length by force invisible, or threading the crowded fleets with the ease of the tiniest boat ; what if, by some magic turn, the nineteenth century and all the magnificence of its wealth and science, had vanished, as it may vanish hereafter, and they had found themselves thrown back three hundred years into the pleasant summer days of 1588 !

Mount Edgecombe is still there, beautiful as ever ; but where are the docks, and where is Devonport ? No vast dry dock rises at the water's edge, Drake's Island carries but a paltry battery, just raised by the man whose name it bears ; Mount Wise is a lone gentleman's house among fields ; the Citadel is a pop-gun fort which a third-class steamer would shell into rubble for an afternoon's amusement. And the shipping, where are they ? The floating castles of the Hamoaze have dwindled to a few crawling lime-hoys, and the Catwater is packed, not as now, with merchant craft, but with the ships who will to-morrow begin the greatest Sea-fight which the world has ever seen.

Such was the Plymouth of Elizabeth's day as pictured by the novelist. But if Plymouth has changed vastly in the course of three hundred years the country around St. Budeaux is probably much the same as it was in Drake's day. The Elizabethan dwellings have gone, and nothing remains of Old St. Budeaux but the battlemented tower of

the church, with the hill-side graveyard clinging around its base. As I climb the hill a crowd of fancies come upon me—day dreams, if you will—and here is one.

On a September morning in the year of grace 1567, mine host of the "Queen's Head," opposite St. Budeaux' Church, stood at his door awaiting custom. Trade was slack in those parts and Master Blackburn cursed his fellows roundly (under his breath) for their sober habits. For he was a nervous man was Master Blackburn, and rarely ventured upon ill words save under great provocation. In person he was short and pot-bellied, with a bullet-head—somewhat bald on the crown,—and a wide mouth which closed like the jaws of a man-trap. He was possessed of a perpetual bad temper which he strove to hide from his superiors—or those of whom he stood in fear—under an effusive manner, while to his underlings he was a very prince of tyrants. But Master Host hastened to put away his silent vituperation when he observed a traveller mounting the hill and making his way towards the inn. As the newcomer approached, Master Blackburn wore the very blindest of smiles on his ill-favoured countenance. The traveller, if one might judge by his rolling gait and bronzed appearance, seemed to be a seafaring man. He was a bold black-eyed individual, but merry withal, and bestowing a curt nod upon Master Blackburn, he seated himself upon one of the benches outside the inn and called stoutly for a tankard of ale. When it was brought he put it to his lips and took a deep draught, but set it down again sharply with a very wry face.

"What call you this, Master Host?" he demanded. "An it be ale I would fain taste of your cyder, but if it be not better than your ale I had as lief have a tankard of sack."

"Why, sure," quoth the host, "the ale is good ale as

need be. You shall find none better down to Plymouth town."

"None better? Why, you rogue-tapster, what know you of Plymouth town and its good ale? Of Exeter gaol, I dare swear, you have more certain knowledge. Nay, gaze not in wonder, Master Blackburn, I know you for as wicked a knave as ever cheated the gallows."

Master Blackburn trembled visibly and turned a shade paler. Nevertheless, he put on a bold front.

"Who be you, sir, that talk thus loudly of Exeter gaol? Some rogue, I warrant, for all your bravery and fine feathers." And Master Host swelled and grew purple with righteous indignation.

"O, you're a pretty man, Master Blackburn," went on the stranger, "and a loyal subject to the Queen's grace, I make no manner of doubt, but you soon forget old friends."

"You be no friend o' mine," returned the landlord in a surly tone.

"No, Master Blackburn? Mind you not of one Robert Pike, down to Tavistock?"

"What! *Robert Pike*?"

"Yes, indeed. What say you to stealing away Master Justice's game by night, mine honest friend? Shall it be said that age hath short memory and small wit? Fie, Master Nicholas!"

"Speak no more of that, friend Robert, an' you love me," quoth the landlord in a whisper.

"Love you, old sour-brew! I'd liefer see you a-dangle from a yard-arm than serving out this rogue's liquor to honest men."

"Why, now, Master Pike, you do me wrong, I be an honest man, I be, and a loyal subject to Her Grace, as all Budeaux knows. Yes, sure, Master Pike, you do me wrong."

"Then all Budeaux knows you not as I know you, Master Blackburn."

"You'm best hold your tongue then, Robert Pike, lest ill befall."

"Ill must needs befall where you be, Master Nicholas, save you be changed in nature as in calling. But fear me not, man, I'd a deal liefer be picking up Spanish gold down to the Indies than splicing old yarns about you, Master Host."

"You were ever a good comrade, Robert," whined the landlord, "and would do no man an ill turn."

"An' you think so, Master Blackburn, so be it," returned the seaman. "Now, tell me," he continued "an' you be able, where dwells Dame Newman in these parts, and her family?"

"What, Dame Newman, of Tavy-side?"

"Ay, sure."

"Why, now, Master Pike, is it Dame Newman you seek, or Mistress Mary, her daughter?"

"I said *Dame* Newman, you rogue!"

"O fie, Master Pike, and you with a wife and family as I hear, down to Tavistock."

The burly seaman grasped his huge tankard and flung it full at the head of Master Blackburn.

"You spawn of Satan," he roared, "an' I do not cut the thread of your rogue's life in another minute it were a pity!"

The pewtar missed its mark, but the enraged mariner sprang at his tormentor with the ferocity of a tiger. "Now, Master Blackburn," he demanded, in a voice of thunder, "say that pretty speech over again!"

But the poor rogue was too cowed to utter a word, and sank upon his knees in abject terror. So Robert Pike merely laughed in his face and thrust him aside.

Two youths who were passing along the road had in the meantime drawn near, apparently much amused by the discomforture of Master Blackburn. One was a round-faced lad of sixteen or thereabouts, with a laughing eye, a shock head of dark, curling hair, and a short, though well-proportioned body. His companion, of about the same age, was a tall, slightly-built stripling, with light hair, tending to redness, possessed of a somewhat furtive manner, and languid in his movements.

"Bear witness, lads," said the seaman, turning to the pair, "that yonder rogue landlord hath sought to lay shame upon an English Seaman, and save that my fool's heart beats too softly towards him, for old time's sake, I had broken every bone in his body else. I spare him now that he may die a dog's death hereafter. Yea, he shall yet hang for a rogue, and 'tis I, Robert Pike, that speak it."

With that the indignant sailor gathered himself together, set his hat jauntily on his head, and prepared to depart.

"Master Blackburn," said he, flinging a coin upon the bench, "there's good money for your bad ale. I would I had broken your pate that I might bestow on you a crown for the mending."

He turned on his heel, waiting for no reply, but the shorter of the two lads laid a hand on his arm.

"Be you Captain Drake's man, Master Pike?" he asked.

"Yea, lad, that am I. I'd follow Captain Drake to the farthest seas—or to the devil, if need be!"

"Well, 'tis no great matter neither," said the boy. "I would do no less—*an' I had but the chance.*"

"Ah, now," said the amused seaman, "that's a brave child! And your friend here—or is it your brother?—hath he such a desire for fire-eating and Spanish dungeons?"

"Master Pike," returned the boy, with a flush, "I will make bold to tell you we are no children. My friend is Gilbert Trevanion, of Tavy Court. I am Antony Newman, and Captain Drake is my very good friend."

"Dear heart alive! Why said you not so before?"

"That had I done, an' you had not been so free with your Spanish dungeons."

"Dear lad, forgive me! Why, 'tis yourself that I seek."

"Me?"

"Ay, none other." Then, dropping his voice to a whisper, he asked, "would'st take ship with Captain Drake, young sir?"

The lad's eyes flashed with the excitement of anticipation. But he feared a trick.

"Do you jest with me, Master Pike?" he demanded with suspicion.

"Nay sure, young master, not I."

"And I am to take ship with Captain Drake?"

But the rough seaman loved his joke.

"That's as may be," he replied, and there was a wicked twinkle in his eye.

"Give me your meaning, Master Pike. I understand you not."

"Why, I doubt me you be too small—yea, I much fear you be,—and daintily fed withal. 'Tis a rough life, young sir," he continued, "aboard ship—ay, a rough life!"

"Well, Master Pike, I am no milksop, and I love not a bed of down. I can handle a sail, too, and," he added with hesitation, "cut a Spaniard's throat, if need be."

"Right, my young gallant, an' you can do that you are the proper lad to sail under Captain Drake. But what says the good Dame to these seafaring fancies of yours?"

"My mother will not stay me, Master Pike, an' I wish to go. And Gilbert, too, would fare with me," he said,

turning to his companion, who had seated himself on a stool near by while he listened to the foregoing conversation.

"Yes, that would I, Tony," responded the lad, "an' Captain Drake will take me."

"Then listen to me, lads, I am now bound home along to Tavistock, and we are well met here. Do you both go down to Plymouth to-morrow; seek out my gallant Captain at the house of Master Hawkins, and settle matters as you will."

"Is there an expedition toward, Master Pike?" asked Tony.

"Yea, lads, and that shortly. Six ships are now fitting out for the Guinea coast, and then Westward-Ho! along lads, and hey! for the Indies, and the money-bags of Spain! Do y' now go and see them, young masters—down to Catwater they lie. Brave ships they be, and well found. But go, lads, and speak with mine honest Captain."

Tony flung up his cap for joy, and the laconic Gilbert Trevanion was scarcely less elated.

The seaman observed Master Blackburn lurking in the background.

"Come here, Master Host," he cried. "Why skulk you there in a corner like some coney-catching rascal? An' you be an honest man, come hither, I say, and pledge me in a cup of thine excellent sack—pray heaven it be such!" And the sight of a silver guilder encouraged the landlord's movements.

So the wine was brought, the peace was made up, and they all parted in a merry humour—the lads turning homewards, and Robert Pike setting his face towards Tavistock. As he took the road one might have caught the words of a sailor's chanty with which he beguiled the way:—

Now it's home along, jolly mariners all,
 And it's home along, quoth he;
 For ever I hear the shore-winds call
 The mariner home from sea!"

Meanwhile, Master Blackburn, gazing at the silver guilder lying in the palm of his right hand, was left to ruminate on the possibility of combining honesty with profit, or false tricks with a whole skin.

* * * * *

It was in this scattered parish by Tavy side that Francis Drake found his future wife. In the little church on the hill he was married to Mary Newman, a St. Budeaux girl, and it was in the old graveyard that she was buried, sixteen years or so after, when Drake was Mayor of Plymouth. Some details in the stormy career of this greatest of sea-captains may be worth recalling. Born at Crowndale, hard by Tavistock, he was the son of Edmund Drake, one of the lesser western gentry, and had for godfather Francis Russell, son of the Earl of Bedford. But the religious persecution of the time compelled Edmund Drake to leave the neighbourhood, and a place was found for him as a sort of lay reader of prayers to the Royal Navy, his home being aboard one of the old-war-hulks that lay rotting in Chatham reach. Here were most of Edmund Drake's children born, and it was here that Francis spent his early boyhood, till his father's forlorn circumstances urged the lad to take service as ship's boy on a channel coaster.

So years rolled on, and the eldest-born went forth and took his chance—

A 'prentice hand on a Ketch that plied to the Channel ports and France.

Dark days had set on England, dark days for such as Drake,

And lurid through the darkness shone the fagot and the
stake;
It was little enough like boyhood's dream, a dreary life at
the best,
With danger and toil for shipmates, and hunger oft as a
guest;
It was little enough like boyhood's dream, when the light on
a sunset sail,
To eyes that followed the outward-bound, was more than a
fairy tale;
To crouch, chilled through, on the dripping planks, and
watch for the roving lights,
When green seas break on the dipping prow, through the
endless wintry nights,
When the blast drives down from Bergen, and the cloud
banks blot the moon,
And the evil sea is a churning race from the chalk cliffs to
the dune;
But the mariner's boy was taught his craft, and in service
learned to rule,
And he braced his nerve, and he trained his eye in a hard
and thankless school.

Sir Rennell Rodd.

At the time of his marriage with Mary Newman, though still in his early twenties, Drake was a man of broken fortunes. He had sailed with his kinsman, John Hawkins, on the latter's third slaving expedition to the Guinea coast. Carrying their black cargo to the ports on the Spanish Main they had disposed of their wares, and were homeward bound when they were overtaken by storms and were compelled to put into the port of San Juan de Ulloa, at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico. The story of Spanish treachery which followed is too well known to need retelling. Of the six English ships which put in the port but two escaped—Hawkins in the "Minion" and Drake in

the "Judith." On January 2nd, 1569, the "Judith" came alone into Plymouth Sound, a battered wreck, and her owner a ruined man—having lost the whole of his small savings in the voyage. He is believed to have found employment in the Navy, serving under Sir William Winter, who "was sent out with a strong fleet under orders to relieve the French rebels in Rochelle, and convoy the English Merchant fleets to the Baltic, where the swelling trade of the country had pushed a new outlet." However, on July 4th in that year he was married to Mary Newman. Then followed the triumphs and honours of his middle life, terminating in that pitiful death off Porto-Bello, when, from the deck of the Queen's ship "Defiance," they gave his body to the deep. You will find no memorial of Drake at St. Budeaux, and the grave of Mary Drake is long ago obliterated. But as I took the road down the hill to Camel-Head, on my way back to Plymouth, I recalled those fine lines of Henry Newbolt's—surely the best tribute to Drake that has yet been written:—

Drake he's in his hammock, till the great Armada's come,
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?)
Slung atween the round-shot, listenin' for the Drum,
And dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
Call him when ye sail to meet the foe;
Where the old trade's plyin' and the old flag flyin',
They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they found him long
ago!

I thought, too, of that colossal statue on the Hoe, bearing the single word "Drake"—nothing more. And what further word need be added? There he stands, trunk-hosed and bareheaded, left hand on hip, and in his right hand a drawn sword, "breast forward," as Browning would

say, and looking boldly out to sea for that Armada which never again will come.

Turning from South Devon to North Devon, I suppose everyone is familiar with Charles Kingsley's description of "the little white town of Bideford," in the opening chapter of "*Westward Ho!*"—that town which "slopes upwards from its broad tide-river paved with yellow sands, and many arched old bridge where salmon wait for autumn floods, toward the pleasant upland on the west. Above the town, the hills close in, cushioned with deep oak woods through which juts here and there a crag of fern-fringed slate; below they lower, and open more in softly-rounded knolls, and fertile squares of red and green, till they sink into the wide expanse of hazy flats, rich salt marshes, and rolling sandhills, where Torridge joins her sister Taw, and both together flow quietly toward the broad surges of the bar, and the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell." Such is Kingsley's picture of the old town, and the glamour of his story—popular to-day as it ever has been—has drawn many to the neighbourhood. But to those who are strangers to the district, I cannot recommend a more delightful haven of rest than this little town on the Torridge river. At Bideford the tide of human affairs appears to flow on much as it used to do, I suppose, three hundred years or so ago, when Sir Richard Grenville and the stout hearts of Bideford went out to do battle against the Spaniards.

From my hotel on the waterside I could look upon the spot where a quay occupies the place of what was formerly an old shipbuilding yard, in which the "*Revenge*" is reputed to have been built.

Crossing the river to the town side on the right-hand one is confronted by the free library, now occupying the ground where the old free Grammar School used to stand

—the School where Amyas Leigh received such elements of learning as it was possible to instil into his honest, unlettered head-piece! To the left is the Church, of which only the square tower remains of the earlier building. Near by, in Allhallam Street, the curious may notice the Castle Inn—which building, in the old days, was Sir Richard Grenville's Bideford house.

On the quay side the wanderer may still take his ease at the "Ship Inn," where "the Brotherhood of the Rose" was founded, and which, if one may judge from its substantial appearance, looks as if it had been built shortly after the great flood and had been intended to last for a considerable time. But before leaving the neighbourhood of the bridge and the church, let me explain something of their history and associations. The bridge, it appears was built in the fourteenth century by the Grenville and other families of the district, each giving an arch, together with endowments to maintain the bridge in proper repair. Consequently many rich estates have come into the funds of the Bridge Trust, and it owns very considerable properties in the shape of land and public and private buildings in the town of Bideford and in the County of Devon.

The Grenville family are still associated with the old town. The Rev. Roger Grenville, a lineal descendant of the great Sir Richard, was Rector of Bideford from 1878 to 1896, when he resigned the living. But much of the fine spirit of his ancestors apparently still inspires their clerical descendant. He caused a brass plate to be put up in the church in 1891, setting forth the story of the great Captain who commanded the "Revenge" in her last fight. The wording of the tablet is worth quotation:—

About the 4th of September, 1591, died of his wounds on board the Spanish galleon *Sant Paule*, off the Island of

Flores in the Azores, having in H.M.S. "The Revenge," endured in a fifteen hours fight the assault of fifteen several armadoes all by turns aboard him, and by Estimation 800 shot of great artillerie besides many assaults and entries,

Sir Richard Grenville, Knight,
Vice Admiral of England,
age 48.

His last words spoken in Spanish were these:—"Here die I, Richard Grenville, with a joyful and quiet mind for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do, fighting for his Queen, Religion and Honour, my soul willingly departing from this body leaving behind the lasting fame of having behaved as every valiant soldier is in duty bound to do"—a fight memorable beyond credit and to the height of some heroical fable.

"The Lady Mary Grenville, daughter unto the Right Honourable Sir John St. Leger, Knight, deceased, and wife to that famous warrior, Sir Richard Grenville, Knight, also deceased, being in his lifetime the Spaniards' terror, was buried in the Grenville isle in this church, on the fifth daie of November, A.D. 1623.

"This memorial brass was erected on the 300th Anniversary of Sir Richard Grenville's glorious death by his lineal descendant, Roger Grenville, Rector of Bideford."

Strangely enough, the paper on which I copied the above proves to be a handbill announcing a thanksgiving service for peace at St. Budeaux Parish Church, on June 8th. It had been given me by the Vicar, who had kindly placed at my disposal such information as he was able to contribute on the subject of Sir Francis Drake. Here was a connecting link between two great men of the same period—one the idol of North Devon as the other was of the South. And in the course of three hundred years it is very remarkable what vast changes have

taken place in the fortunes of the towns associated with their names. Plymouth, in those old days, has been described as "a petty place," while Bideford—still "the little white town"—was a port of considerable note. These changes were brought home to me very forcibly as, on a sunny afternoon, I made an excursion up the Hamoaze to Saltash Bridge. All that broad waterway was studded thickly with warships of all shapes and kinds. Here the old wooden walled H.M.S. "Impregnable" lay at her moorings; there a line of some half-dozen torpedo-destroyers lay squat, black, and ill-looking just above the water-line. Around were others of the armour-plated battleships of to-day, with their conning towers, their great bow-guns, and stern-chasers, and with oft a dangerous looking muzzle pointing out below the bulwarks. On the right, stretching far along the shore, Stonehouse and Devonport gleamed white in the sunshine, with their vast arsenals and docks, while behind lay the forts of the Citadel, and on Drake Island, and on the Breakwater out in the Sound. But Bideford has lost its shipping and has been lapped in sleep for three centuries. Appledore, too, is a dreamy old place, and the presence of a stranger in its quaint, narrow, cobble-paved streets offers something of a sensation to the barefooted urchins who turn out to gaze at the alien who breaks upon their solitude. It must be admitted that the neighbouring town of Northam has given itself up entirely to the golfers, and the Burrows have taken upon themselves the new game of Westward-Ho!—a mushroom place consisting of two hotels and a crowd of lodging-houses. But the old pebble ridge, where Amyas Leigh used to bathe, is still untouched.

I sought out also Burrough Court, the ancestral home of the Leigh family, which lies hidden away in a blind lane, hard by Northam town, a delightful old mansion, almost

lost in the labyrinth of its own green shrubberies and rose gardens.

It would be vain to attempt to say anything fresh about Clovelly. Lying some twelve miles from a railway station the hand of the spoiler has hitherto spared its outward appearance, and if its inhabitants have lost that simplicity of character which would seem appropriate to their surroundings, one cannot perhaps justly complain. Clovelly Street has been often described, and perhaps Charles Dickens' picture of it in his "Message from the Sea" is as graphic as that of any other word painter.

But the summer visitor of to-day will find few evidences of the people being a fishing community. Almost daily, during the holiday season, the Swansea boats discharge their hundreds from Ilfracombe and elsewhere, upon Clovelly beach, and the fishermen find sufficient occupation in taking toll of their visitors, and the two inns of the place are taxed beyond their capacities.

Among the visitors are many Americans. And I note one representative of young America who crosses over to the small post-office, and purchases some half dozen picture post-cards. Then he seats himself on a door-step, takes out his fountain pen, fills in the space, and posts the cards from Clovelly Street to his friends in America. Having now accomplished the *serious* business of his visit he enquires whether there is anything else to be seen. I recommend the church, a mile or so away, and he posts off in search of it. But all visitors to Clovelly are not like this young American. His was not the spirit that inspired William Cory's very charming lines entitled "Clovelly Beach," and perhaps few to-day may recall them:—

O, Music! breathe me something old to-day,
Some fine air gliding in from far away,
Through to the Soul that lies behind the clay.

This hour, if thou did'st ever speak before,
Speak in the wave that sobs upon the shore,
Speak in the rill that trickles from the moor.

Known was this Sea's slow chant when I was young;
To me these rivulets sing as once they sung,
No need this hour of human throat and tongue.

The Dead who loved me heard this self-same tide,
Oh that the Dead were listening by my side,
And I could give the fondness then denied."

But to return to Bideford. Kingsley's description of the old town is so well known that little addition is needed to picture the place as it is to-day, for its main features remain practically unaltered. In districts now so famous as the Kingsley country it is not often that one can get out of the beaten way of tourists, but my good friends at the hotel offered to make arrangements for me to go two sea-trips. One suggestion was that I should go with Captain Dark, who runs a small sailing-boat with the mails from Instow for Lundy every Thursday. This offer I was not able to avail myself of at the time, but I was enabled to visit the island a week later from Ilfracombe, touching at Clovelly on the way. The other suggestion was that of spending a day with a Bideford trawler, which I gladly accepted. Nine o'clock the following morning found a companion and myself aboard the "Deera," a sixteen-ton, cutter-rigged yawl, and as dainty a craft as the heart of man could wish for. There were some transient gleams of sunlight lying athwart the river as the "Deera" slipped her moorings, and dropped down the stream with a light breeze. There were, perhaps a dozen boats going out with that tide, and several were already well down the river. I had not much opportunity for gazing about just then, as I was promptly put in charge of the tiller, but I cannot recall

a more beautiful sight than the Torridge river that morning. Behind was the old grey bridge with the tide at full beneath it, and beyond lay the thick woods, chiefly of oak and ash, on either bank as the river takes a bend in the direction of Torrington and Wear Giffard. On our left was the old quay with its broad walks and well-timbered avenues, and behind these the old-fashioned inns and white dwellings of the dear old town, while before and around us the dark brown sails of the fishing boats lent a touch of deeper colour to the scene.

This was a district endeared to Kingsley's childhood, and it seemed to me that his mind was dwelling on recollections of this delightful Torridge river when he penned those lines in "Water Babies."

Strong and free, strong and free,
The floodgates are open, away to the sea,
Free and strong, free and strong,
Cleansing my streams as I hurry along,
To the golden sands, and the leaping bar,
And the taintless tide that awaits me afar.
As I lose myself in the infinite main,
Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned again.

So we dropped down with a gentle motion past Instow on the right, and then round the bend where the river widens out into Appledoré Pool. Here we caught the breeze, and there seemed every prospect of uncertain weather. The fishing-ground varies. Sometimes the boats lie off towards the more open water over against Lundy, but on this occasion the "South Gut" was taken over the shallows, the tide being at flood, and the boat's course was laid towards Clovelly, now under press of sail, as the wind served, and again with the lighter canvas furled. The breeze, which at first promised well, was variable, and

often we lay becalmed. So for a whole day we tacked about the bay, a mile or two off Clovelly. At one time the little hill-side town stood out clearly beneath a gleam of sunlight and blue sky, and at another it was lost in cloud. Then the Skipper took out his glasses and searched for wind. Yes, there it was blowing the clouds over Gallantry Bower, maybe, or further west towards Hartland Point. So the boat was put about and the foresail run up by our mate Eli, and, in a short time, the little craft was running along merrily. Eli was a man of few words, and as we learned, had served his term in the navy before taking to trawling. About noon, he disappeared into the little cabin, placed aft, and shortly reappeared announcing that "coffee was ready." We had been fitted out with a huge basket of provisions from the hotel, but the kindly insistence of the skipper and his mate that we should descend and help ourselves to the coffee could not be resisted, and we enjoyed a hearty meal in the warmth of the cuddy fire. Touching this generosity and friendliness of the men of the West Country, I had the opportunity of verifying some words of Richard Jefferies in "Red Deer," when walking, a week or so afterwards from Porlock Weir to Porlock town.

"Go where you will," he says, "in red deer country, you will be met with politeness, hospitality, and readiness to oblige. If you are thirsty, you have only to knock at the nearest door, and, according to your taste, you can partake of cider or milk; and it is ten to one you are asked to enter and spend half-an-hour in a pleasant gossip. . . . On the road every man you meet, according to his station, nods his head or touches his hat, and no one passes another without saluting. Walk down the village street, and all who are about, in their gardens, at their doors, on horseback or afoot, wish you "good morning. This is not only observed towards visitors, but amongst themselves."

Many of these tokens of goodwill I experienced during my walk, and, making a casual visit to the old "Ship Inn," because I expressed an interest in the place, I was at once invited to ramble over the house and inspect the old-fashioned fruit-garden behind. And the same courtesy which obtains in the Exmoor country I also experienced in the neighbourhood of Bideford.

Having finished our meal by the cabin fire we again came on deck. It was cold for the time of the year, with occasional heavy showers, calling oilskins into requisition. The net, meantime, had been thrown out, but a poor "catch" was expected, owing to the variable wind, which never held for long. Towards five o'clock, or so, the net was hauled up, and the work of sorting began. Quite half the "take" consisted of dog-fish, a voracious creature of the shark species, two feet or more in length. These fish are very common along the Devonshire coast, and as they swim low in the water, and hunt for prey in troops there are consequently a great many come into the nets. When the net was emptied these fish, which are useless as food, were picked out, killed, and thrown overboard. The only valuable portion of the "catch" consisted of some thirty soles, which bring the fishermen, on an average, a shilling per lb., a small turbot, besides a modest basketful of plaice and grey mullet, an odd skate or so, and a few oysters from the sea-bottom. When the sorting was finished, our friend Eli set to work on the soles, taking out the gut, before the fish were dead. Then the deck was swilled and the net carefully cleaned of every particle of refuse.

The work of the day being now practically over, a turn was made for home. But the tide was not yet up, and for an hour or thereabouts our little craft lay beating about off the bar. During this period of waiting, and at other intervals during the day, our skipper told me something

of his history and daily life. For twenty-three years he had sailed his boat, which bore his wife's name—and an earlier one—in and out of that river, and had never had a mishap. Could he swim? Yes, but there were many of the Bideford seamen who could not. He had taken to the sea at the age of nine, having to earn his own bread. He had had little education, but spoke in a cultured tone, never used bad grammar, and discoursed to me on many subjects—from the history of nations to the chronicle of the Coronation Stone. Would he have a pipe of my tobacco? No, he was a non-smoker. He had a family of boys to feed, and clothe, and educate. His eldest, aged twelve, had leanings towards art, and another wished to be trained as an Engineer. Well, heaven help thee, Skipper of the “Deera,” and all good luck to thee and thine! There is small scope for young ambitions in the little white town, and the boys must needs go out into the greater world in pursuit of ideals or fortune.

As dusk was falling the “Deera” was again at the quay side, and I took my leave of the genial skipper. I see him now, in my mind's eye, as I saw him then—a fine, well-set-up man, of six feet, blue-eyed, and with a frank and open bearing—as excellent an example of a master-mariner of to-day as one could wish to see.

Something might be said of pleasant hours spent in Lynton, where the East Lyn and the West Lyn meet, in rambling Combe Martin, and storm-swept Lundy, and picturesque old Porlock, with its straw thatches, and rose-covered dwellings, nestling under the warm shelter of Exmoor. But I have already trespassed too far, and so take my farewell of the Oak Woods and the good red earth of Devon and Somerset.



HERBS FROM GERARD'S GARDEN.

BY ARTHUR W. FOX.

TO most field-botanists the name of John Gerard is a household word, which like similar names of departed worthies, is little else. There is scanty information at best concerning the life of this veteran herbalist, and the few facts to be hereinafter set forth have been culled from the admirable but all too brief article in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. His manner of life is betrayed by many pages of his book, but exact details are for the most part wanting. The time-worn folio, which he in part edited, in part compiled and in part translated, is now rarely seen, save in occasional and usually incomplete copies of its second edition with large additions, corrections not always so correct as the original, and carping criticisms by the Royalist physician and warrior, Thomas Johnson. The authors of popular treatises on what is known as English Botany have found Gerard's work a quarry of quaint information and bygone folk-lore, in which they have dug much and which they have by no means exhausted, though many of them would seem to have contented themselves with copying from one another. Linnaeus recognised the debt of students past and future to their predecessor by naming an important genus of plants, *Gerardia*, just as later botanists have similarly honoured the distinguished Swedish naturalist. It may

therefore be worth while to devote some little time to the consideration of the first of our greater English herbalists, though he did not actually publish the first English Herbal.

To Henry Lyte belongs the credit of first translating from the French and publishing a rendering of the *Pemptades* of the famous Dutch botanist Rembert Dodoens, more familiarly known as Dodonaeus. Lyte's work was, however, chiefly that of a translator, whereas Gerard was both a careful observer of plants themselves, and a by no means unskilful editor. The *Herball* gives evidences on every page of the patient keenness with which its author watched the growth of many of the plants therein described, while there are numerous instances recorded of his journeys on horseback or on foot in search of rare specimens and continual references to his own extensive garden. He had his correspondents in many counties and in more than one country, who supplied him alike with seeds and with information more or less authentic. He has, it is true, been severely criticised by his first editor on account of his exaggerated claims, his incomplete knowledge of the Latin of his original, and on many other grounds of varying strength. But the fact remains that he did know more of the nature of plants than the majority of his critics, while in a superstitious age he was freer than many of his contemporaries from the grosser superstitions of his time.

John Gerard was born at Nantwich in 1545, and was of the kindred of the Gerards of Bryn, of whom Sir Thomas was created Baronet by James I. He was educated at a school at Willaston. After he had completed his course here, he is said, while quite a boy, to have travelled in Scandinavia and Russia. In 1562 he was apprenticed to Alexander Mason, a surgeon in large practice in London, in whose employment he acquired much of that careful

knowledge of simples, which stood him in good stead in the composition of his great book. On December 9th, 1569, he was made freeman of the Company of Barber Surgeons, and at this point of his career he disappears from view for a considerable period. He reappears on June 19th, 1595, when he was elected a member of the Court of Assistants of the same august company. During these twenty-six years he was probably occupied in practice, in cultivating his large garden in Holborn, and perhaps in superintending Lord Burleigh's gardens in the Strand, then a rural road, and at Theobalds in Hertfordshire. In 1595 he was certainly employed by Burleigh, whose interest in plants was his most respectable characteristic, while in 1596 he published his *Catalogus Arborum, etc.*, or complete list of the plants, shrubs and trees grown in his own garden. A second edition of this interesting little work appeared in 1599 with a dedication to Sir Walter Raleigh, that universal patron of genius, and a third was issued in 1876 by Benjamin Daydon Jackson.

In 1597 appeared the *Herball*, of which more will be said in due course. The same year just before or just after, but in either case on account of the publication of his book, he was made Junior Warden of his Company. On January 15th, 1598, and again on July 20th, 1607, he was appointed examiner of candidates for the Freedom of his Company, in which distinguished office his wide, and for the time, accurate knowledge of simples would doubtless enable him to puzzle simples of another and more ingenuous kind. In 1604 he obtained the lease of a garden near Somerset House, which he made over to Robert Earl, of Salisbury, during the following year. On August 17th, 1607, he received perhaps the greatest distinction of his life in his appointment to the Mastership of his Company. During February, 1612, the old herbalist passed away, and

was buried in St. Andrew's, Holborn, where, however, there is neither monument nor trace of his grave. With these meagre facts of the life of John Gerard, we must remain content. Those who quietly pursue knowledge for its own sake do not always, nor indeed often, make a great noise in the world. Others build upon the foundation which they have laboriously laid, while louder-voiced but less original men gain greater renown. Yet Gerard's botanical zeal, his intense love of nature, his single-hearted simplicity deeply tintured by common sense, and his real modesty, thinly veiled by traces of an artless vanity, deserved at least a memorial tablet or a mural brass.

Though the exact site of his grave is unknown, Gerard has left an enduring monument in his *Herball*, which is one of the most interesting books of the last years of Elizabeth. As far as can be gleaned from conflicting evidence and spiteful innuendo, John Norton, afterwards the King's printer, had employed a certain Dr. Priest to translate the *Pemptades* of Dodoens into English. Perhaps the work of the Dutch botanist had been enlarged, or Lyte's translation was not considered sufficiently accurate. However that may be, before he had completed his work the worthy though all but unknown doctor died, and as Gerard says, his manuscript perished with him. Thomas Johnson contradicts this statement, and asserts with damaging comments that the manuscript was handed over to Gerard, who made considerable use of it without acknowledgment. On the matter in dispute no verdict can be given, as on either side there is mere assertion. Similarly Gerard may have been indebted to Lyte's translation, which he does mention several times: but a careful comparison of the two works hardly favours the supposition. He did not arrange his *Herball* after the pattern of Dodoens, but followed the order set forth in the *Adversaria*

of Matthias Lobel, which appeared in 1590. His eighteen hundred woodcuts, with the exception of sixteen newly made to record his own discoveries, he obtained through the aforesaid John Norton, from the *Eicones* of Bergzabern, better known as Tabernaemontanus, a book printed at Frankfort, in 1590, and containing a superb set of plates.

To the general body of the book of Dodoens he added translations from such well known herbalists as Matthioli and Crusius. Thus in a large measure his *Herball* is a compilation; but he did not content himself with the work of a mere compiler; he corrected his authorities upon occasion, he added to the descriptions of the plants which he had himself actually seen, he gave additional localities to those found in Britain, and additional uses drawn from his own experience, and from the simple pharmacopœia of his day. To this extent his book is original, and every now and then he gives the reader interesting glimpses of much observation and sly peeps into the time in which he lived. Furthermore he has imparted a fragrance of his own to his work, which, like the subtle blending of the perfumes of his own sweet herbs, is more easily perceived than described.

At this point it will be profitable to consider what is proudly styled *The Herball or generale Historie of plantes gathered by John Gerarde, of London, Master in Chirurgie*. The printers of the first edition were Adam Islip and John Norton, and its date was 1597. The printers of the second edition of 1636 were Adam Islip, Joice Norton and Richard Whitakers. The frontispiece of this second edition is a fine example of the engraving of John Payne. Like many similar allegorical frontispieces it is divided into nine panels, which contain the following subjects in order. First a solid-looking Ceres and a plump Pomona

between them support a curious botanical garden, surmounted by the Hebrew tetragram usually Englished Jehovah, under which is a scroll displaying the Vulgate representative of some of the words of Genesis i., 29: "Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is." Beneath the garden on another scroll is this somewhat limping Latin distich:—

Excideret ne tibi divini muneris Author;
Praesentem monstrat quaelibet herba Deum.

Next Theophrastus, a most reverend figure, and Dioscorides, pleasantly endowed by the artist with supremely sturdy limbs, support the title as already given. Lastly two conventional vases, filled with no less conventional but beautifully engraved flowers, support an exceptionally fine portrait of the author. It is a keen and thoughtful face with handsome features, which is instinctively felt to be a true likeness of the real man. The first edition had no such elaborate frontispiece, but contained a woodcut portrait of the author.

The book is dedicated in a noble preface far less fulsome than was usual in those days of hungry eulogists, to Lord Burleigh, one of Gerard's constant patrons and himself deeply interested in garden lore. Two laudatory letters from Lancelot Brown, Queen's Physician, and Matthias Lobel, follow with six eulogies or elegies, in enthusiastic but not always adequate Latin verse from Gerard's medical friends. Two most interesting letters from Stephen Bredwell, Physician, and George Baker, "Master of the Chirurgions of the Citie of London," come next, and last, but by no means least, a letter to the reader from Gerard himself, which is modestly expressed, but which would seem to disown the use of Dr. Priest's manuscript. For this statement, Dr. Thomas Johnson, his first editor, falls very foul

of him, and gives his reasons at full length in his pompous "Letter to the Reader," which follows Gerard's more modest letter in the second edition. As has been said, the rights of the controversy cannot now be settled, and we must leave the two worthy doctors to settle their dispute in the place whither they have gone. One remark may not be unfitly made, that Gerard's tone is wholly in his favour, and his fine nervous English and single-hearted piety cannot fail to deeply impress the reader.

The *Herball* opens with a brief indication of the method of classification adopted, which would be interesting only to botanists. Each plant is then set forth with a careful engraving to impress its form upon the reader, in most cases with admirable success. Each is then described under the following heads: "The Description," "The Place and Time," "The Names," "The Nature and Vertues," and usually "The Temperature." Though not conceived after the manner of modern botanists, "The Description" is, as a rule, clear and intelligible, and more especially so in the case of those plants which Gerard knew from his own observation. Of the flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) for example, he remarks:—

This Water Gladiole, or grassy rush, of all others is the fairest and most pleasant to behold, and serveth very well for the decking and trimming up of houses, because of the beautie and braverie thereof, consisting of sundry small leaves, of a white colour mixed with carnation, growing at the top of a bare and naked stalke, five or six feet long and sometime more. The leaves are long and flaggie, not much unlike the common reed. The root is threddy and not long.

Once more speaking of what he appropriately calls the cat's-taile (*Typha latifolia*) he says:—

Cat's taile hath long and flaggy leaves, full of a spongeous matter or pith, amongst which leaves groweth up a long,

smooth, naked stalke, without knot, fashioned like a speare, of a firm or sollid substance, having at the top a browne knop or eare, soft, thick, and smooth, seeming to be nothing else but a deale of flocks thicke set and thrust together, which, being ripe, turns into a downe and is carried away with the winde. The roots be hard, thicke, and white, full of strings, and good to burne, where there is plenty thereof to be had.

It will be readily admitted that the foregoing descriptions, though not couched in the elegant and more exact terms of systematic botanists, are at least sufficiently vivid to call up a picture of the plants represented. With like vigour Gerard described each of the plants, which he had either seen growing wild or had cultivated in his garden. More examples need not be cited; but a perusal of the *Herball* will tend to purify the English and enlarge the understanding of all who undertake the pleasant task. Where the herbalist has not seen any plant, he contents himself with simply giving the best translation of his original which he could compass, and in which he sometimes makes curious mistakes. It is in the chronicle of the plants which he had seen, that Gerard gives evidence of marked originality, as anyone who will take the trouble to compare his work with that of Lyte will be constrained to confess. His native vigour, his pithy characterisation, his close attention to details, and his happy use of just the right adjective for his purpose, give him no mean rank amongst the earlier writers of English prose.

When he describes "The Time and Place," perhaps he is most interesting to the general reader, who has no botanical tastes. He recalls a time long past, when the acres of houses which make up London's mighty wilderness were not yet in being. His work may be used as an invaluable supplement to Stow's *Survey*. He speaks of

green fields and rural lanes, where now stand long lines of more or less inelegant streets. He tells of vanished brooks, of the time when the Strand was a rural lane with the houses of great noblemen embosomed in gardens on one side, when the cities of London and Westminster were parted by patches of country, when Holborn was a village and Snow Hill was actually white with winter snow. It is the London in which Shakespeare acted and sang; the London of the great Elizabethans, with its old houses more picturesque to look at than to live in, with its green fields, with its primroses on Primrose Hill, its fair villages of Hampstead and Highgate, and its ancient borough of Southwark. A hundred passages, and a hundred more recall that time—the great, the unforgotten—when rare flowers bloomed, where now “the long street roars,” with its dreary lines of the endless tumult of traffick. To take one illustration, the bur-reed (*Sparganium ramosum*) he says, grows:—

In the ditches about *S. George's* fields, and in the ditch right against the place of execution at the end of Southwark, called *S. Thomas Waterings*.

The bur-reed is found here no longer; it has vanished with the ditches and with the place of execution, and the scene of its former growth knows it no more.

Similarly in speaking of the Man Orchis (*Orchis militaris*) or “souldiers cullions,” as he calls the plant, he affirms that:—

It groweth in the fields adjoyning to the fold or pin-fold without the gate, at a village called Highgate neere London.

Again he notes that the water arrow-head (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*) once grew in the Tower Ditch, that the garden nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*) was to be found in “Ber-

mondsey Street by London," and that many more plants, some of great rarity, once adorned what are now populous places trodden by the hurrying feet of busy thousands. The reader, who is interested in the topography and appearance of bygone London, will easily be able to put together a picture of its past from the pages of Gerard. The old botanist knew the neighbourhood of the twin cities well; he had searched all suitable spots to find simples both for use in his practice and to grow in his garden; and he has left a record of vanished fields and departed woodland, which tell of a picturesque country long ago surrounding the London wall and the boundaries of Westminster. The march of centuries has brought with it measureless advantages; but something has vanished, which can never be replaced, and were the good herbalist now alive and set into the midst of London, he would indeed rub his eyes and confess himself utterly lost in the city where he had lived so long.

Gerard was ever on the look out for new simples to add to his garden. He had the spirit of the scientist joined to the simplicity of his time. He travelled through certain parts of Lancashire and of his native Cheshire. Upon one occasion at least he visited the ancient seat of the elder branch of his family at Bryn, near Wigan. Here he says the dittander (*Lepidium latifolium*) grew wild, as indeed it did nearly three centuries afterwards, before the collieries which now occupy the site of the old mansion had made their appearance. The same plant, he tells us, grew in his day near his birthplace at Nantwich, where also the buckwheat (*Polygonum convolvulus*) was to be found, as indeed it may to-day in fields and gardens. He had correspondents in more than one of the English counties, and noblemen did not hesitate to send him rare plants from foreign lands. Amongst these was Thomas Hesketh,

apparently of the stock of the Heskeths of Rufford, who had an ancient friendship with the Gerards of Bryn. This worthy sent our author seeds of the sea campion (*Silene maritima*) from Lytham, which Gerard erroneously states to have been "five miles from Wygan." Either this correspondent had told him, or he had himself discovered that the moonwort (*Botrychium lunaria*) was to be found in a wood near "Fairest (Fairhurst), which is in the neighbourhood of Latham." That he was in Lancashire, we shall see in its place. But he did not confine his energies to the north; he travelled, as he says himself, through the West of England, Northamptonshire, Kent, Essex, and many other English counties.

On one of the most interesting of these rambles he found himself a welcome guest in the parsonage of the gentle Nicholas Fuller at Hildersham, in Cambridgeshire. He was in search of the Pasque flower (*Anemone Pulsatillo*), which grew abundantly in the genial parson's close. Of him Gerard has left the following loving testimony:—

The parson's name that lived at the impression hereof was Mr. Fuller, a very kind and loving man, and willing to show unto any man the said close, who desired the same.

A pleasant picture is herein presented to the reader's mind of a happy time spent with the kindly clergyman, than whom a tenderer soul never lived. These instances of the travels of Gerard have been chosen at random to show the keenness of his interest in the native flowers of his country. If he knew little of the mysteries of the physiology and morphology of botany, he at all events perceived the beauty of the flowers, which he found, and registered their habitats, thus laying the foundations for more exact classification. In this sense he was a pioneer of the modern science of plants, which owes no small debt to patient observers like him.

When he speaks of the uses of simples Gerard displays a shrewdness not unmixed with the credulity of his time. He was never afraid of making an experiment, even though he smarted for his curiosity. The following characteristic illustration will serve to exemplify this habit of mind. Speaking of the acrid juice of one of the spurges (probably *Euphorbia paralias*) he says:—

Some write by report of others, that it enflameth exceedingly, but my selfe speak by experience; for walking along the sea coast at Lee in Essex, with a gentleman called Mr. Rich, dwelling in the same towne, I took but one drop of it into my mouth; which neverthelesse did so enflame and swell in my throte that I hardly escaped with my life. And in like case was the gentleman, which caused us to take to our horses, and poste for our lives unto the next farme house to drink some milke to quench the extremitie of our heat, which then ceased.

A vivid picture is here presented of the two old worthies taking to horse and galloping off to assuage the pain, which they had brought upon themselves. The acrid juice of most of the spurges produces a parching effect upon the throat; hence the older herbalists described them as being of the highest degree of temperature. Furthermore, in their practice of physic the doctors of a former time based their treatment on the supposed existence of four humours in the body. Choler, for example, needed simples of a low degree of temperature, whereas melancholy could only be cured by simples of a cheering sort.

It may be said, that such notions belong to a superstitious age. Let it never be forgotten, that superstition is the source of science, just as astrology is the source of astronomy. Moreover, it would be wholly unjust to mock Gerard, because he adopted the crude scientific notions of

his age. Nay, even modern men of science have their pet superstitions, as was witnessed by the credulity of the British Association with respect to the admirable M. Rougemont. Gerard was by no means generally superstitious; on more than one occasion he goes out of his way to correct the follies of his day, and to warn the unwary against those unlicensed remedies, which were put forward by quacks. In speaking of the henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*) he calls attention to a frequent trick of contemporary quacksalvers. He says:—

The seed * is used by Mountibank tooth-drawers which run about the country, to cause wormes to come forth of the teeth, by burning it in a chafing dish of coles, the party holding his mouth over the fume thereof; but some crafty companions to gain mony convey small lute-strings into the water, perswading the patient, that those small creepers came out of his mouth or other parts which he intended to cure.

The foregoing is an admirable illustration of Gerard's attitude to many of the supposed remedies of his day, to which he offered uncompromising opposition. He kept an open mind to proved remedies used by his fellow-practitioners, many of whose experiments he records side by side with his own.

Of his attitude to some of the supernatural explanations of forms of plants, or their use in art magic, two examples may be profitably given; the first because it explains the origin of a familiar name and the second because it tells of a superstition not wholly dead in the West of Ireland. Of the devil's-bit (*Scabiosa succisa*) he writes:—

The root is black, thick, hard, and short. The great part of the root seemeth to be bitten away; old fantasticke

* This seed is still sold for a similar purpose by chemists, as a friend has informed the author.

charmiers report, that the diuel did bite it for envie, because it is an herbe that hath so many good vertues, and is so beneficial to mankinde.

It is obvious that Gerard had a quiet scorn of the dictum of these "old fantasticke charmiers." Similarly he notes of the moonwort (*Botrychium lunaria*):—

It hath beene used among the Alchymists and witches to doe wonders withall, who say, that it will loose lockes, and shoes, and make them to fall from the feet of horses that grase where it doth grow, and hath beene called of them *Martagon*, whereas in truth they are all but drowsie dreams and illusions; but it is singular for wounds as aforesaid.

With many similar comments does the shrewd old chirurgeon saue his narratives of contemporary superstitions. The medicines, which he had tried and tested, he was ready enough to recommend, with a firm belief in their uniform applicability to trying cases and dissimilar temperaments; but he had small sympathy with fairy legends or the wonders of witchcraft.

Of his own use of simples illustrations must be given, both on account of their interest to folk-lorists and their possible healing power. Of the golden rod (*Solidago virgaurea*) he gives both an interesting use and an eminently shrewd note:—

It is extolled above all other herbes for the stopping of bloud in sanguinolent ulcers and bleeding wounds; and hath in times past beene had in greater estimation and regard than in these daies: for in my remembrance I have known the dry herbe which came from beyond the sea sold in Bucklersbury in London for halfe-a-crowne an ounce. But since it was found in Hampstead wood, even as it were at our townes end, no man will give halfe-a-crowne for an hundred weight of it: which plainly setteth forth our in-

constancie and sudden mutabilitie, esteeming no longer of any thing, how pretious soever it be, than whilst it is strange and rare. This verifieth our English proverbe: 'Far fetcht and deare bought is best for Ladies.' Yet it may be more truly said of phantasticall physitions, who, when they have found an approved medicine and perfect remedie neere home against any disease, yet not content therewith, they will seeke for a new farther off, and by that means many times hurt more than they helpe. Thus much have I spoken to bring these new fangled fellows back againe to esteeme better of this admirable plant than they have done, which no doubt have the same vertue now that then it had, although it growes so neere our own homes in never so great a quantity.

The sarcasm is well deserved; nay it were to be wished that modern physicians would pay more heed to the virtues of herbs than they do, instead of being deterred therefrom by the abundant quackery unfortunately connected therewith.

In another place Gerard says:—

The juice of bistort (*Polygonum bistorta*) put into the nose prevaieth much against the disease called Polypus and the biting of serpents or any other venomous beast, being drunke in wine or the water of Angelica.

He continues:—

The root taken as aforesaid (boiled in wine) staieth vomiting, and healeth the inflammation and soreness of the mouth and throat: it likewise fastneth loose teeth, being holden in the mouth for a certain space and at sundry times.

Whether these remedies will be found sufficient or no depends upon experiment; but there is some inherent probability in the first and the last from the astringent properties of bistort. A very curious use of colewort (*Brassica oleracea*), or our wild cabbage, is set down in its place to the following effect:—

It is reported that the raw Colewort being eaten before meate, doth preserve a man from drunkennesse: the reason is yeilded, for that there is a natural enmitie betweene it and the vine, which is such, as if it grow neere unto it, forthwith the vine perisheth and withereth away: yea, if wine be poured into it while it is boiling, it will not be any more boiled, and the colour thereof is quite altered.

On this it may be remarked, that Gerard only says, "It is reported," whereby he means to say that he has not tried the remedy in question, and therefore expresses no opinion as to its efficacy. That is characteristic with him; what he himself has tried in his practice, he advises on his own authority, what he has read he advises on the authority of others, without committing himself to its results.

Of sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) he notes several virtues, amongst which are these:—

The juice hereof in Summer time is a profitable sauce in many meats, and pleasant to the taste: it cooleth an hot stomacke, moveth appetite to meat, tempereth the heat of the liver, and openeth the stoppings thereof.

Moreover, he gives an excellent receipt for a cooling drink:—

The leaves of Sorrell taken in good quantitie, stamped into some ale, and a posset made thereof, coole the sicke body, quench thirst, and allay the heate of such as are troubled with a pestilent fever, hot ague, or any great inflammation within.

The drink thus made sounds more sensible than savoury. Many who have rejoiced in "claret cup," may never have known the reason why bcrage (*Borago officinalis*) is a necessary ingredient. Gerard supplies the reason, which dates from a hoary antiquity:—

The leaves and flower of Borrage put into wine make men and women glad and merry, driving away all sadnesses, dulnesse, and melancholy, as *Dioscorides* and *Pliny* affirme.

Moreover, his own experience would seem to warrant the cheering properties of borage and its exhilarating effect upon the human frame, since he strongly recommends its use to relieve the "cardiack passion of the heart," and for "the falling sicknesse."

Before quite leaving Gerard's simples it will be well to quote some of his remarks upon that interesting weed, tobacco, which he seems to have used medicinally rather than from true love thereof:—

The dry leaves are used to be taken in a pipe set on fire and suckt into the stomacke, and thrust forth againe at the nostrils, against the paines in the head, rheumes, aches in any part of the bodie, whereof soever the originall proceed, whether from France, Spaine, Indies, or from our familiar and best knowne diseases. Those leaves do palliate or ease for a time, but never perform any cure absolutely: for although they empty the body of humors, yet the cause of the griefe cannot be so taken away. But some have learned this principle: that repletion doth require evacuation; that is to say, that fulnesse craveth emptinesse; and by evacuation do assure themselves of health. But this doth not take away so much with it this day, but the next bringeth with it more. As for example, a Well doth never yeeld such store of water as when it is most drawn and emptied. Myselfe speak by prooffe; who have cured of that infectious disease a great many, divers of which had covered or kept under the sicknesse by helpe of Tabaco as they thought, yet in the end bin constrained to have unto such an hard knot, a crabbed wedge, or else utterly perished. Some use to drink it (as it is termed) for wantonnesse, or rather custome, and cannot forbear it, no not in the midst of their dinner; which kinde of taking is unwholesome and very dangerous: although to

take it seldom, and that physically, is to be tolerated, and may do some good: but I commend the syrrop above this fume or smoky medicine.

Here several years before King James issued his famous *Counterblast* is an ancient practitioner pointing out the possible evils of a habit, which had only begun in his day. Whether tobacco be taken "for wantonnesse" or "physically" let smokers decide; but in either case it has a subtle and soothing influence upon human irritability, of which Gerard had little experience.

Perhaps sufficient simples have now been culled from the *Herball* to illustrate the author's caution and his credulity, his readiness to make experiments and his contempt of contemporary quackery. But no account of this great work, which passes over its occasional snatches of verse, could be considered complete. Sometimes Gerard's muse rides on a pedestrian Pegasus; but now and then his translations shine with the feeling and some of the poetry of their originals, if they do not always express the literal meaning. To take one example: he thus translates Vergil's *Georgic IV.*, 271—274:—

In Medes (meads) there is a flower *Amello* nam'd
By him that seeks it easie to be found,
For that it seems by many branches fram'd
Into a little wood; like gold the ground
Thereof appears; but leaves that it beset
Shine in the colour of the Violet.

The last line of the foregoing is both musical and beautiful in itself, and what is more, expresses fairly well the meaning of the original. With it we shall rest content with the further remark that there are many such snatches of song scattered through the *Herball*, which show that the old gardener loved to sing at his work.

Gerard, it has been said, and said truly, was not generally superstitious, yet he had one pet superstition which appears at the close of his book, and which may perhaps be set down rather to defective observation than to absolute credulity. But it is so singular that it must find a place here. He says:—

But what our eyes have seene, and hands have touched, we shall declare. There is a small Island in Lancashire called the Pile of Foulders, wherein are found the broken pieces of old and bruised ships, some whereof have beene cast thither by shipwracke, and also the trunks and bodies with the branches of old and rotten trees, cast up there likewise; whereon is found a certaine spume or froth that in time breedeth unto certaine shells, in shape like those of the Muskle, but sharper pointed, and of a whitish colour, one end whereof is fastened unto the inside of the shell, even as the fish of Oisters and Muskles are; the other end is made fast unto the belly of a rude masse or lumpe, which in time cometh to the shape and forme of a Bird; when it is perfectly formed the shell gapeth open, and the first thing that appeareth is the foresaid lace or string; next come the legs of the bird hanging out, and as it groweth greater it openeth the shell by degrees, till at length it is all come forth, and hangeth only by the bill; in shorte space after it commeth to full maturity, and falleth into the sea, where it gathereth feathers, and groweth to a fowle bigger than a Mallard, and lesser than a Goose, having blacke legs and bill or beake, and feathers blacke and white, spotted in such manner as is our Magpie, called in some places a Pie-Annet, which the people of Lancashire call by no other name than a tree Goose; which place aforesaid, and all those parts adjoyning do so much abound therewith, that one of the best is bought for three pence. For the truth hereof, if any doubt, may it please them to repaire unto me, and I shall satisfie them by the testimonie of many good witnesses.

On the foregoing it may be noted that Gerard only shared

the belief of his day, while with more wisdom than most of his contemporaries he sought to establish the truth of his belief by investigation, which indeed proved unsuccessful.

The foregoing long quotation, as well as the one relating to tobacco, have been set in their place partly from their own inherent interest, and partly to illustrate the nervous vigour of Gerard's style. He used a forcible and homely English of his own, by no means easily surpassed amongst the writers of his day. Numbers of old words are scattered about his pages, some of which might well have been preserved even in our own supercilious and fastidious age. Such words as "pullen," "rundle," "knop," and a host of others have a Saxon or Middle English ring about them, which chimes pleasantly in the student's ear. The most careless reader of the *Herball* will not fail to perceive what pains its author took to express his meaning clearly. His object was to make his readers understand what he had written. Yet though he would seem to have taken no more pains with his style than this primary object demanded, he has formed a very distinctive style of his own, a subtle compound of pithy phrase, quiet humour sparingly used, noble simplicity and striking vigour. He does not commonly pile up words to produce a weighty effect, but prefers to make each tell its own tale, while he has a subtle feeling both for the rhythm and for what may be called the colour of language. He uses many Latinised words, it is true, but the basis of his great book is sturdy Saxon with an occasional echo of the northern dialect of his native Cheshire.

He may have made serious mistakes, as his first editor asserts with undue asperity, but at all events he compiled a great book, into which he set much original matter told with great originality of expression. Moreover for his age

he was a man of considerable scientific attainments, and he had the true scientist's habit of keen, patient and faithful observation. Though deceived upon occasion, he was by no means the credulous person whom some of his detractors have pictured. He both observed continually and recorded the result of his observations skilfully. That he was indebted to his botanical predecessors is a mere truism. Who, indeed, does not owe a like debt in other matters than in botany? But he certainly made his authorities his own in all those cases, in which they were describing plants found either wild or in the gardens of England. How interesting would a walk round his garden with the old worthy have been; how joyously would he have described his plants and gloated over his curiosities. That we cannot share, but we can at least walk with him through the simples of his book and listen to his quaint talk about each across the centuries. A modest man withal and a pious was John Gerard, and no fitter conclusion to this brief study can be found than the words wherein he rounds off his life's work:—"And thus having through God's assistance discoursed somewhat at large of Grasses, Herbes, Shrubs, Trees and Mosses, and certaine excrescences of the earth, with other things more incident to the histories thereof, we conclude and end our present volume, with this wonder of England.* For the which God's name be ever honoured and praised."

* The wonder of the barnacle-geese.





IDEALS AND FADS.

BY JOHN WILCOCK.

THE study of the ideal is inseparable from literature, is, indeed, its essence and vitality. "All human things do require to have an ideal in them, to have some soul in them, were it only to keep the body unputrified," wrote Carlyle. And as literature is the school for the development of higher human life, every period, or literary age, is linked one with another in striving after the ideal. The ideals of one period cease to be ideals as soon as they are realised in a subsequent period; but that which makes all literature valuable is the fact that no literary period has yet had its ideals fully accomplished.

Space prevents us here going far into history, and we are anxious to come to the consideration of the ideals operating at the present time. It is necessary, however, to hark back a little to see how some ideals have come down to us.

Critics assist us considerably in their division of literature into "schools of thought," and whilst it is quite impossible to round-off any group of writers as belonging to a given period, and none other, there is no individual author of obvious ability who does not in some way express the spirit of his age. It may be in some conventional method or style, or in a purposed antithesis which suggests that period; it is most likely to show itself in the struggle

with some vital problem or ideal, which is revealing a new era to be realised by those who follow.

The exact, laborious methods of the writers in the early part of the 18th century formed an excellent school of discipline to the authors who followed in the revolutionary days of its close. The revolt in Pope's age against the "false wit," and the "false quantities," which he found in the writers immediately preceding him, left a clearer course for the Georgian men in their gradual introduction of the "nature school." Notwithstanding this, we find Cowper complaining, in one of his letters, that "Pope was a mechanical maker of verses, and in every line he ever wrote we see indubitable marks of most indefatigable industry and labour." In this Cowper was but rebuking the methods of one of his schoolmasters. Cowper's themes were more simple; his style was consequently more natural and terse. To him the ornate polish of Pope was a fad; but there is abundant evidence in his own high literary style, even had he not confessed the fact, that he was quite as fond of searching after "pretty images and a pretty way of expressing them."

These representatives of two definite periods wrought in different workshops. Pope's Pastorals have been described as made in Fleet Street, whilst Cowper's were produced where the material grew—a matter of vital importance when comparing the productions of great writers, either from the point of view of the ideal or that of technique. The Nature School which Cowper introduced has received the greater credit, on the score of imagination, than its predecessors. The rhetorical, artificial style has been condemned as too scholastic for the exercise of the imagination. Brilliancy of speech, and accuracy of reasoning, are methods which can be acquired, but "passion, wisdom, creative force, the power of mystery

or colour," says R. L. Stevenson, "are allotted at the hour of birth, and can neither be learned nor simulated." Be this as it may, when we are in search of the ideal it is to imagination that we must go, and imagination is not the heaven-born gift Stevenson would have us believe. We cannot have the ideal without imagination, neither can we have the ideal without the idea, which also is a matter of study more than is technique or style.

Wordsworth warned his generation from confounding imagery with imagination. Much of his work, he tells us, was influenced by his environment at the time of writing. And in seeking the ideal in those charming Pastorals into which Cowper brings the very perfume and colour of rural scenery, we often find nothing more than accurate imagery, depicting things as he saw them around him. Pope's Pastorals, on the other hand, were dependent upon his imagination. They may not be as correct in detail, but he paints things "as they appear to the mind of the poet." And, as Wordsworth maintained, "imagination is a subjective term; it deals with things not as they are, but as they appear to the mind." This is the pathway to the ideal. Here imagery fails where imagination succeeds. The painter invests his picture with a conception, the photographer only describes a place or an event. The same distinction separates the poet from the journalist. It is not that imagination will not operate whilst surrounded by the objects from which it is building up an ideal, but that imagery often plays tricks with the mind, and when we think we are imbibing a beautiful ideal we are but learning by rote facts concerning the aspects of nature which one day may be questioned when we come face to face with them.

Nor does this apply only to the poetry of nature. It

rules in the prose of philosophy and criticism. Imagery, however beautiful and perfect, in itself is not satisfying. It is part of the technique of the art of expressing or interpreting the phenomena of nature in the most acceptable manner. And it fails in its purpose if it does not convey the impression to the reader which has been made upon the mind of the writer. It is an attribute of style in which many great writers have wandered about until they have lost their mental impressions. We have a glib saying, "The style is the man," but we know that the man is not the style.

Imagery is a most potent characteristic of style. It rouses the imagination and stirs the mind to activity in other directions. Wordsworth states the case clearly in "The Excursion":—

Happy is he who lives to understand,
Not human nature only, but explores
All natures, to the end that he may find
The law that governs each; and where begins
The union, the partition where, that makes
Kind and degree, among all visible Beings;
The constitutions, powers, and faculties,
Which they inherit—cannot step beyond—
And cannot fall beneath; that do assign
To every class its station and its office,
Through all the mighty commonwealth of things;
Up from the creeping plant to sovereign Man.
Such converse, if directed by a meek,
Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love;
For knowledge is delight, and such delight
Breeds love; yet, suited as it rather is
To thought and to the climbing intellect,
It teaches less to love than to adore;
If that be not indeed the highest love!

To "explore all natures" we must have both science

and philosophy, and the mood suitable for meditation. Through all these we find the ideal; not by the mood minus the science or the philosophy. To reduce the chaos of nature to a presentable picture, the most perfect imagery requires the aid of imagination. If there be a difference between the minor and the major poets, it lies in using up all the poet's imaginative powers to produce the meditative mood. Cowper's imagery led him into this mood, and he found relief in writing those beautiful hymns which have brought peace to many troubled souls. In the hands of devout masters hymn writing may become a divine ideal, but it may easily be reduced, by insincerity, to a puerile fad.

The Lake school, however, were not content with moods. Coleridge's metaphysics, from which none of that school could escape, introduced possibilities for new ideals. Call it mere mental exercise or the science of unknown quantities as you will, Coleridge's metaphysics made Tennyson and Browning possible; another also, whose work seems only just arriving—Matthew Arnold. His "Literature and Dogma" has yet to be dealt with, although it has been before the public these thirty years. If a wiser consideration had been given to his ideas, we should not now be crowded out with amateur theologians. To them it is a literary fad; but for those who wish to see the religious ideal based upon conduct realised, this book is a revelation of the errors which have crept into the theological world through a scientific interpretation of literary terms in the Bible.

Whatever period this generation be in now, whether it be termed the later Victorian or the Edwardian, it is a period in which ideals are becoming more obscure, and, at the same time, more needful. We have the science of all the ages, and we have a literary heritage whose bound-

less wealth cannot be expressed in words, and yet we are producing a literature as little influencing current thought in the way of a new and fit ideal as the literature of the past. Indeed, the more an author resembles the Georgian or the Queen Anne period,—we dare not expect a reproduction of the Elizabethan,—the more we rejoice and the more critics feel at home. There is practically nothing coming from the higher spheres of literary study dealing in a permanent and scholarly manner with the competitive spirit which is influencing every walk in life in this age, for good or for evil; and we have painful evidence of too much of the latter. Our philosophers write as onlookers; their facts are only hearsay, and a paragraph of practice will confound volumes of their theories. They are producing a literature which is purely empirical, and will become ephemeral the moment the right man comes to lead the ideas of this period into the channel of the ideal. He may be writing now, but he is not popular, and so cannot become known without long suffering and patience. This is the moment of fads; they are more popular than ideals, and pay publishers better. Indeed, the populace have reversed the terms, and look upon a man with an ideal as just the man with a fad.

Now "fad" is one of those words dear to the heart of the scientific economist. It implies that meaning with which you choose to invest it. A man with a fad is not necessarily a faddist; whilst a faddist may not display any definite peculiarity of taste or habit which could be designated a fad. Many so-called fads require qualification. A man with a hobby would not care to be considered a crank, which is synonymous with "crazy," and yet you might say he has a fad. Recently there died in London a rich banker, who had a fad for collecting every kind of vehicle and royal equipage he could find. Many a bit of

fun must his coachmen have had as the collection increased. But this fad has produced most valuable information for the antiquarian. Many fads are possible ideals. The later dictionaries suggest that the word is of Anglo-Saxon origin. It was not a dictionary word in Johnson's time. He has the word to "faddle"—to toy (or to trifle) with. In the present instance we use it, in the Johnsonian sense, as an antithesis of ideal, which is a word that admits of no variation of meaning. Ideal is based upon the idea, and there is no nonsense about ideas. They may not be understood, but they should not be mistaken. The moment an idea presents itself we respect it, and we at once deem it unjust to term it a fad. We know that we might betray our own shortcomings by doing so. In the current literature of these times ideas are few, and the reason is not far to seek. The spirit of the age is money-making, and none of us can get away from it. This spirit has entered into the arts, the sciences, and literature. Writing has become just as much a business as the making of pork-pies—if it is not attended with greater risks. All men in trade must be practical, and this qualifies a man for telling a fellow working-man when he meets one. The attractions of a literary calling are greater than most classes of trade, and where permanent employment is obtained the emoluments are not unsatisfactory. For it men leave the pulpit, the bar, the dispensary, almost any other profession after they have passed the portals of popularity. During their apprenticeship literature has been nothing more than a fad to toy with. Much reading makes you write, and the critics will tolerate a hundred lines of nonsense for one that is worth remembering. Most probationers try holding up the mirror to the ugliest phases of human nature they can find or imagine. They hope to show it the higher

ideals later on, after they have captured their thousands of readers who will peruse anything they wish to say upon anything at all. One of the problems which will trouble the next period to this is how the noblest personalities, whose private lives have been a continued struggle for the ideals which self-sacrifice and personal service produce, could have spent the greater part of their time in a manufactured atmosphere which was revolting to the quiet judgment of the well-balanced minds of the day.

The fact is, most of the errors of this age are economic errors, and these are the impediments to both the conception and the attainment of ideals. These are the source of most of those incompatibilities which crop up in every sphere of life. This spirit of money-making needs the closest investigation by scientists and literary men alike. We have had enough of preaching about it. It has come to stay, but no man can say it is satisfactory either as a fad or an ideal. The movement of the cash decimal to the right or the left ought not to decide the success or non-success of a man's life-work. A millionaire by this scale is but the man who, by some means or other, has contrived to get the decimal six points to the right. This is not a figure of speech, it is a fact. The millionaires are telling us how they have achieved this, and we can reason the thing out for ourselves. A while ago the new millionaire Rector of St. Andrews spent 96 per cent. of his Rectorial address on the industrial ascendancy of the world in telling his students that the commercial supremacy of Britain has passed to her eldest son across the Atlantic, "who now wears the crown, and will never forget, nor cease to be proud, of the mother to whom he owes so much." In the remaining 4 per cent. of his time he assured the youths that in her literary men and their work the unfortunate mother held treasures worth more than the

crown and all its possessions. Whether the millionaire Rector meant that all that he had stated in showing them how to become millionaires was merely a fad compared with the grand ideal of creating literature is not quite clear. But it does not contradict the fact, which all true literary taste teaches, that it is a far nobler ideal of life to develop one's functions to the utmost, and to strive to secure a suitable environment in which those functions can be of the greatest benefit, both to the man himself and to those immediately about him, than the making of millions of money which may amount to a fad when he comes to spend them.





SOME WOMEN OF THE EARLY DRAMATISTS.

By J. H. HOBBS.

IN Philip Massinger's tragedy, "The Duke of Milan"—
"often acted," as the title to the first published copy
issued in 1623 runs, "by His Majesty's servants at the
Blackfriars"—we are introduced to a woman who was
designed as a paragon of her sex. In the person of
Marcelia, wife to Lodovico Sforza, every virtue that a
woman can possess is, we are repeatedly assured, embodied.
She is chaste, constant, generous, modest. Says one of the
characters of her:—

She's indeed
The wonder of all time,

Sforza himself boldly asserts:—

The phoenix of perfection ne'er was seen
But in my fair Marcelia.

She is, indeed,

So absolute in body and in mind
That but to speak the least part to the height
Would ask an angel's tongue, and yet then end,
In silent admiration.

And a great deal more to the same effect throughout the
play.

The lady herself, however, does not bear out these

fulsome recommendations. She moves through the play with dignity, but it is the dignity of a well-moulded wax figure. Doubtless Massinger did his best to draw a pure-souled, devoted wife, rare both in mental qualities and personal charms; but we are shocked somewhat when we discover the "fair Marcelia" in the second act engaged in a good set brawl with two other ladies of the Court. We should be constrained to admit that she acted under great provocation; but, though we may allow extenuating circumstances, we don't henceforward regard her as quite the lady she is alleged. Here is the occasion:—Sforza is away at the head of his army helping another princeling to thwart Charles of France. Marcelia for the most part "keeps her private chamber," or ventures only to the Church to "pay her pure devotions." The mother and sister of Sforza bear no love to Marcelia; and they take advantage of Sforza's absence to vent their spite upon her. Failing to engage Marcelia in a compromising situation, they resort to the thin device of exasperating her by engaging in a little revelry under her chamber window. Marcelia, evidently offended, appears at the casement, and a competitive display of language ensues. The Princess is invited to come down so that the matter may be settled in the courtyard.

Forty ducats on the little hen,

cries out the fiddler; and a moment later the "wonder of all time" bounces on to the stage, eager for the fray.

Where are you,

You modicum, you dwarf?

she bawls out, and makes straight for her tormentors. Fortunately the guard is ordered out, and appears on the scene before much actual injury is done. It might be interesting to attempt a solution of so strange an instance

of eccentricity on the part of the heroine of one of our classic tragedies. Perhaps such a scene gave a relief, that pleased the groundlings, to an otherwise heavy tragedy. Possibly Massinger wanted to show that, along with a multitude of virtues, Marcelia was the possessor of no mean spirit; but such speculations have no call upon us just now. Yet this instance of eccentricity is one of the very few human touches we get from this creation of Massinger as she stalks to and fro uttering her rhapsodical metaphors and haughty platitudes.

For my purpose the early dramatists are those who centre immediately about William Shakespeare—Marlowe, Chapman, Jonson, Ford, Webster, Heywood, Dekker, Massinger and the rest.

Shakespeare's women I shall not interfere with. They have been rediscovered so often that my views about them could not be either novel or interesting. With the other women the case is different. They are not so attractive as their compeeresses called into being by Shakespeare; and women in books and plays are pretty much in the position of those in real life, sought by reason of their pleasing graces and other exceptional qualities. Some of them may, like Ford's Calantha and Massinger's Camiola, surpass in dignity of passion and intellectual strength; or, like the unconstrained lasses and homely dames of Dekker and Heywood, claim consideration because in them we see, or think we see, types of English womanhood of three centuries ago—round of limb, of wholesome mind, a little of the salt of romance in their blood, and not lacking in certain broad virtues of a domestic character. But I doubt much that we would forsake our Portia or our Rosalind, our Beatrice or our Juliet, for the whole host of heroines that parade the pages of the lesser dramatists.

It will thus be evident that it is not with any design of

seducing sympathy on behalf of these neglected ladies that I draw attention to them. Some of them, like Marcellia, are of curious interest, because of incongruity of character from an artistic point of view, others for other reasons of curiosity, mental or moral deformity. And perhaps not a few of them exhibit those excellent parts by which women of all stations in every period win our admiration.

Whatever the qualities—by this I mean those artistic and dramatic qualities under which the character is presented rather than the qualities of mind or heart that the character is endowed with—these women possess, and they are not by any means rare, there is, to my mind, generally lacking that subtle touch which gives the colour of life, the twitch of nerve to what they do, by which cold marble and dull clay are transformed into feeling, living human organisms. We see them but not into them. They talk; but their voices are metallic. They move through the acts of the drama in a mechanical procession, delivering as they go certain dramatic formulæ appropriate to the development of the plot, and in strict accordance with the situations aimed at. Their love passages are too carefully elaborated, their emotions are artificial, and often fail to touch one. Their passionate outbreaks seem to recur according to certain fixed rules. Be they of the palace or the hovel, they labour the burden of their wrongs and disappointments to an extreme which, whilst it may become tiresome, is not often impressive. Most of them are anæmic creatures; and, though some of them are appallingly wilful and callous, especially those of Italian extraction, they are limp, fibreless mortals for the most part. Often the sense of what they would express is smothered in rhetorical verbiage, and one may, with Flaminio in "*The White Devil*," say of their lines:—

These are but grammatical laments,
Feminine arguments; and they move me,
As some in pulpits move their auditors,
More with their exclamation than sense
Of reason or sound doctrine.

But such objections can only be understood to apply in a very general way. There are moments in which the fervour of life glows; and frequently passages flash out which take high rank, even by comparison with the finest dramatic conceptions of their age. I have two instances in mind, one in which Camiola in "*The Maid of Honour*" (Massinger) makes her "fearless indictment" of the doctrine—much to the fore at the time—of the divinity of kings. Standing before her judges, she says to the King of Sicily:—

With your leave I must not kneel, sir,
While I reply to this; but thus rise up
In my defence, and tell you, as a man
(Since when you are unjust, the deity
Which you may challenge as a King, parts from you).
'Twas never read in holy writ or moral
That subjects on their loyalty were obliged
To love their sovereign's vices.

The other is the scene in Ford's "*The Broken Heart*," in which Calantha, by a sublime effort of will, sacrifices her feelings on the altar of duty. "The expression of this transcendent scene," says Charles Lamb, "bears me in imagination to Calvary and the Cross; and I seem to perceive some analogy between the scenical sufferings I am here contemplating and the real agonies of that final completion to which I dare no more than hint a reference."

Strange as some of these women may seem to us now, it is certain they had their charms for the subjects of

Elizabeth and James. We can easily imagine with what gusto they would applaud Heywood's Bess in "*The Fair Maid of the West*," a somewhat impossible girl, yet withal a robust type, or meant to be so, of the English woman of the period. Bess is an attractive, sprightly damsel when first we meet her, drawing wine in a Plymouth tavern. She is courted by the gallants and the seafaring bravos of the town, but turns a cold shoulder to them. A coarse jest induces her admirer, one Spencer, to run a certain foul-mouthed captain through, and as a result Spencer has to fly the country, which serves as a very good hook upon which to hang the plot of the play. Spencer is a man of means, and makes over a portion of his wealth to Bess, and instals her as mistress of a tavern in Cornwall. Here she makes so good an impression that the Mayor of the town tries to arrange a match between her and his son. Bess, however, is proof against all temptations, and remains true, as we expect she will, to her absent lover. Presently comes a report of Spencer's death. Bess sells out of the wine business, charters a vessel, and with a crew sworn to secrecy puts out to sea. For what reason we are not clear, but whatever the reason may be she arrives timely on the scene, where her Spencer lies captive among the Moors. Bess's beauty fascinates, and her diplomatic skill confounds the King of Fez so completely that her lover is pardoned and restored to her. Of course, she brings Spencer home, justice turning her blind eye towards him; and, as Bess has by this time reached the mature age of seventeen years, the pair settle down to enjoy a life of ease. Despite some failings in the presentment, Bess is, on the whole, one of the most human of women of the early dramatists, though, like many of her sister heroines, she is too stilted in the romantic moments of her busy life, as, for instance, on taking leave

of Spencer after the fatal duel which necessitates his flight:—

Oh that I had the power to make time lame
To stay the stars or make the moon stand still,
That future day might never haste thy flight.

We can understand Marlowe's *Faustus*, in the extremity of his final despair, using a similar illustration in like terms, but from the mouth of a tapstress such language has a counterfeit jingle.

Heywood furnishes us with a few women of incongruous parts in his comedy "*The Wise Woman of Hogsdon*," and with a horrible female automaton in the shape of Tullia in "*The Rape of Lucrece*." Beside her, Lady Macbeth is mild and inoffensive. Tullia is unconvincing from the rank brutality of her character. Like the Lady Macbeth, she has ambitions towards a throne; but her father stands in the way. He is butchered in the Senate House, and Tarquin, husband to Tullia, mounts the vacant throne. Immediately Tullia cries:—

Tear off the crown that yet impales the Temples
Of our usurping father—quickly lords,—
And in the face of his yet bleeding wounds
Let us receive our honours.

And a few moments later, finding that some obstruction lies in her way, she asks: "What block is that we tread on?" And to the reply of Lucretius that it is her father's body, and that her shoe "is crimsoned with his vital blood," says:—

No matter, let his mangled body lie,
And with his base confederates strew the streets.

For, mounted like a queen, 'twould do me good
To wash my coach-naves in my father's blood.

In the "*Fair Maid of the Exchange*," Heywood presents another heroine, Phillis, who is loved by and loves

in return a cripple who has rescued her from a brutal ruffian. "But Heywood had not the courage," says Symonds, "to develop the situation, so he makes the cripple plead the cause of another suitor, to whom, at the end of the play, Phillis transfers her affections with a levity and complacency that would be offensive in real life.

Webster founded upon Italian and Chapman upon French history a number of tragedies that provide us with ample material in the pursuit of our object. Vittoria, in Webster's "*The White Devil*," and Tamyra, in Chapman's "*Bussy D'Ambois*," possess many traits in common, but Chapman's Tamyra is a colourless creation beside the more skilfully drawn Vittoria of Webster. Both are intriguing faithless women. Both, as usual, possess more than the full complement of physical charms. Vittoria appeals more successfully to our sense of dramatic propriety than does Tamyra, who is a nerveless creature throughout, and who, as the catastrophe is reached, becomes contemptible where she was meant to be impressive. Vittoria, vile as she is, wrings pity from us whilst asking only for such scorn as she pours upon those who have compassed her ruin; and the mocking gibes with which she meets death move us more than the maudlin platitudes with which Tamyra departs to her uncertain abode.

The Duchess in the "*Duchess of Malfi*" is another example of Webster's power in gripping the attention whilst he unfolds the horrors that, according to popular belief at the time, bound up the destinies of Italian women of a century earlier. This tragedy furnishes a liberal display of those materials he utilised for the building up of his morbid tragedies, "materials which," says J. A. Symonds, "are sought for in the ruined places of abandoned lives, in the agonies of madness and despair, in the sarcasms of reckless atheism, in slow tortures, griefs

beyond endurance, the tempests of sin-haunted conscience, the spasms of fratricidal bloodshed, the deaths of frantic, hope-deserted criminals." The early features of the Duchess's career are rather of a sensual turn. Left a widow in her youth, she engages in a secret alliance with her steward, and bears him three children. There is no pretence about her affections, they are confessedly animal affections. Rumours of her shame reach her brother, the Duke of Calabria, and henceforward she is marked as the victim—or the chief victim, for the father of her children and the children themselves are included in the scheme—of such a vengeance as only an Italian of the fourteenth or fifteenth century could invent, or a Webster dramatise. She is scarcely a woman one can like in the early part of her career as we see it unrolled, but in her affection for her children she is simple and tender. And she endures the diabolical horrors to which her ingenious brother subjects her with a quiet indifference that transfixes one. As a dramatic conception the Duchess is the most finished thing in the shape of a woman that Webster achieved.

Of course, such impressions as one gets of these women in the study may fall short of those that a capable representation on the stage might produce; for the pompous lines which seem so stilted and artificial in cold type undoubtedly stirred the feelings of an early seventeenth century audience in a manner that might not be credible now had we not independent evidence to that effect.

Still, like Acres "*Damns*," they have had their day, and they must rest content with such attention as now and again the curious like to bestow upon them, not merely because they are old, but because they possess certain intrinsic merits, and because, apart from their own joys and sorrows, they cast sidelights on a period that an Englishman is never tired of reverting to with pride.



QUATRAINS.

By FREDERICK SMITH.

THE world is one vast Caravanserai,
Swept by the winds and curtained by the sky;
Here born we know not why, the sport of Fate,
We eat and drink, and laugh before we die.

At best we have but little time to stay,
So break our fast, and face the rising day
And the grim bell that marks the passing hour,
With the same voice welcomes or sends away.

Each passing traveller here may take his rest,
One, with high service of the welcome guest,
Another, stretched beneath the quiet stars
In brief forgetfulness, is nightly blest.

Fit billets wait for each to claim his own,
Tho' oft miscarried as by strange winds blown;
Meanwhile a King may tarry at the gate,
A vacant fool may sit upon a throne.

The needy wastes, the miser has to pay—
The generous soul has nought to give away;
The spendthrift scans abashed an empty purse
And sells his birthright for a holiday.

The singer hath a song he never sings,
Deep in his heart his sweetest music rings;
His precious message no one hears or heeds,
For lo, his jarring lute has broken strings.

Unto the poet, light in broken gleams
Shines from the misty haven of his dreams;
Beside his dusty highway flows unseen
The cool delight of subterranean streams.

Life pours a golden stream into the glass,
Compound of mirth and bitterness and gas;
The bubbles rise impatient to be free,
So rise our joys and just as fleetly pass.

Youth comes with interludes of tears and play,
Vexed with the mirage of a coming day;
Manhood! a quick wrist and a trusty blade
Shall serve us best to hold the world at bay.

We seek no favour, blame no circumstance,
But strike our tent and take our journey's chance;
In the world's tourney never brave heart yields,
The prize may flutter from a broken lance.

May-be the Gods, unwitting or unkind,
Passing too near have left us maimed or blind;
We'll wear our bruises lightly as we may,
And heal them over with a dauntless mind.

When fortune smiles on every careless throw
All wheels run smoothly, nor too fast or slow,
For your fine pleasure, tremble and beware
For soon some cunning hand will lay you low.

Swift be thy willing soul to do or say
The deed or word that falls to thee to-day.
One laggard moment and the golden chance
Has passed for ever on its skyward way.

Give as thou wilt the first fruits of thy gain;
Yield up the darling wish of heart and brain,
Pour forth thy treasures, hope for no return
For who will share thy bitterness and pain.

Pity the priest who giveth stones for bread,
Who bears no water from the fountain head,
Nor any message from beyond the stars
Whereby our sorrows may be comforted.

Full soon the silver thread of life is ended,
The broken, golden bowl, may not be mended;
The pitcher broken, all its precious store
Lies with the common sand for ever blended.

"Its precious store." Ah, who can fathom it,
The graceful tenderness, the pleasant wit,
The fragrance of fine thoughts and kindly deeds,
The light of shining eyes that love hath lit.

And yet, some subtle essence may arise
Like perfume of spilt wine of sacrifice
That shall be garnered up and once again
Look out a human soul thro' human eyes.

Or in the mighty arbitrage of fate
It may endure, Eternal, isolate,
Amid the dust of stars, the wreck of worlds,
To move, to order, and to re-create.



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